

MODULE 2
FAMILY STRENGTHS AND
GOALS

MODULE 2

Theme:

Focusing on the Family Strengths and Goals

Materials:

- **Interventionist Workbook** (*Module 2 Log*)
- **Interventionist Manual**
- Pens/markers



OVERVIEW: MODULE 2

- Check-In
- Discussing Family Strengths and Goals
- Resettlement & Coping
 - Increase Caregiver Knowledge of Post-resettlement Family Life
 - Discussion: Managing and Coping with the Stress in Family Life
 - Helping Children Cope with Stress
 - Discussion: Distress related to Resettlement
- Discussing the Children's Role in the Family Strengths and Goals
- Check-Out

STRENGTHS & GOALS





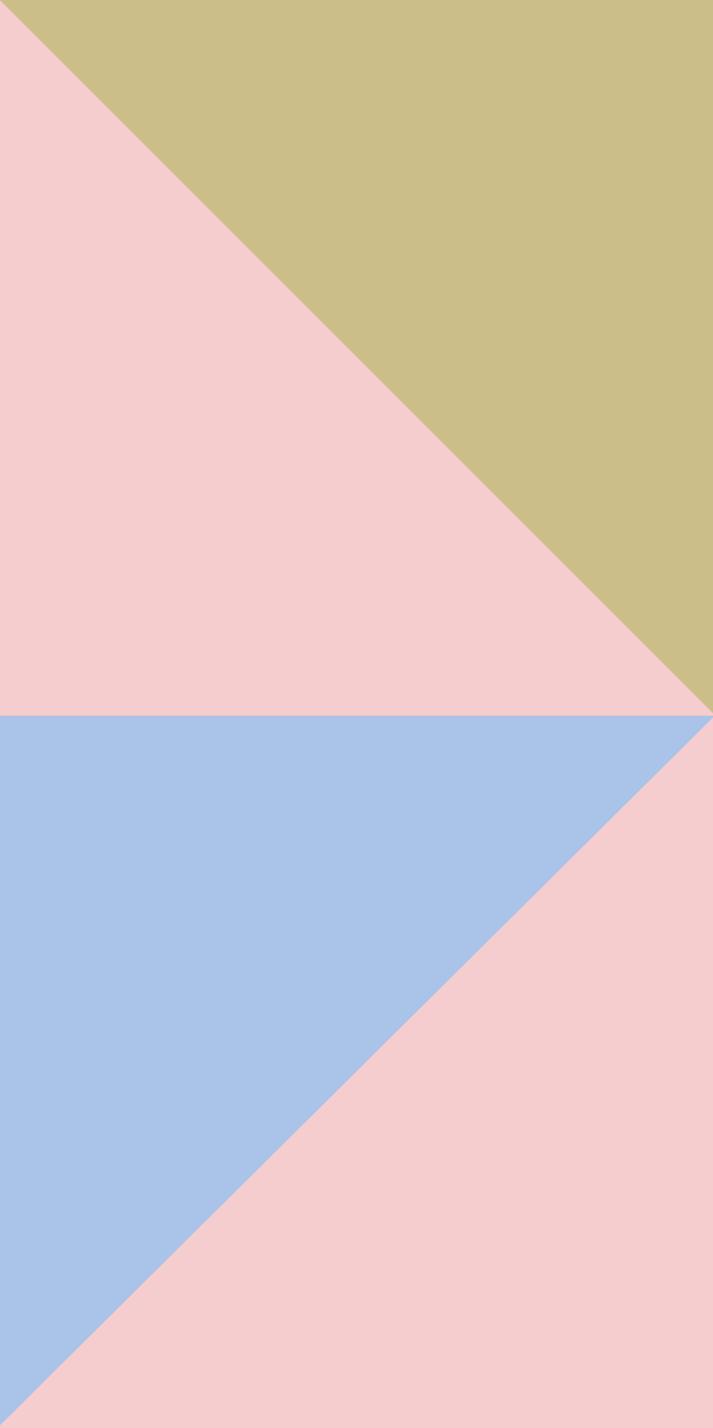
FAMILY STRENGTHS

- Ask the caregiver(s) about their individual strengths and family strengths and how these strengths help them stay strong together as a family.
- In order for families to overcome challenges they must have a support system within themselves and the community.
- Talk about what makes their family strong.
- Record strengths in the ***Strengths, and Goals*** template of the workbook.

NOTE FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

In module 2 you will focus on identifying and building individual strengths and family strengths.

- Your individual strengths are skills, abilities or qualities that you have as a person, like:
 - being punctual,
 - being good in household chores.
- A family strength is the skills, qualities or abilities of a family unit, like:
 - having open communication within the family,
 - having an environment within the household that is supportive for everyone.



VIGNETTE- STORY OF THE MIGHTY ANT

Page 30 from (English) Interventionist Manual



It can be difficult to talk with parents about their strengths. What are questions you can ask to help get at strengths?



SUGGESTED TEXT

FAMILY STRENGTHS

❖ *“We talked about some of the challenges that your family has faced. Now let’s talk about the things that have helped you to get through hard times. Often, resettlement issues and other challenges obscure positive or good things that happened. What good things do you remember?”*

- *“Tell me a time you’ve been happy as a family”*
- *“Tell me about the things that have helped”*
- *What are strengths you see in yourself?*
- *What are the strengths you see in your family?*
- *What are strengths you see in each of your children?”*

(Note: People may mention community and religious support, personal strengths, or membership in associations.)

FAMILY GOALS



- Ask the caregiver about their individual and family goals and how these goals will help them become stronger together.
- If any goals are inappropriate for this intervention explain this to the parents and provide appropriate referrals.
- Let caregivers know they can reach larger goals through small steps, family unity & community support.
- Record goals in the ***Strengths, and Goals*** template of the workbook.

NOTE FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

In module 2 you will also be focusing on identifying and building individual goals and family goals. A goal is something that we want to achieve.

- You can have individual goals like:
 - you want to develop a healthier lifestyle.
 - want to be working at your dream job in 5 years.
- You can have family goals like:
 - learn how to have family conversations about difficult topics,
 - help children do better in school.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

FAMILY GOALS

It can be difficult to for caregivers to think of goals especially if they are still unsure about the intervention.

What can you do to help them?

FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

- Sometimes caregivers can go into details of traumatic past events, and this can bring up many emotions for them.
- What are some strategies you can use to divert the sessions back to the topics respectively and end the session on a positive note?



RESETTLEMENT & COPING

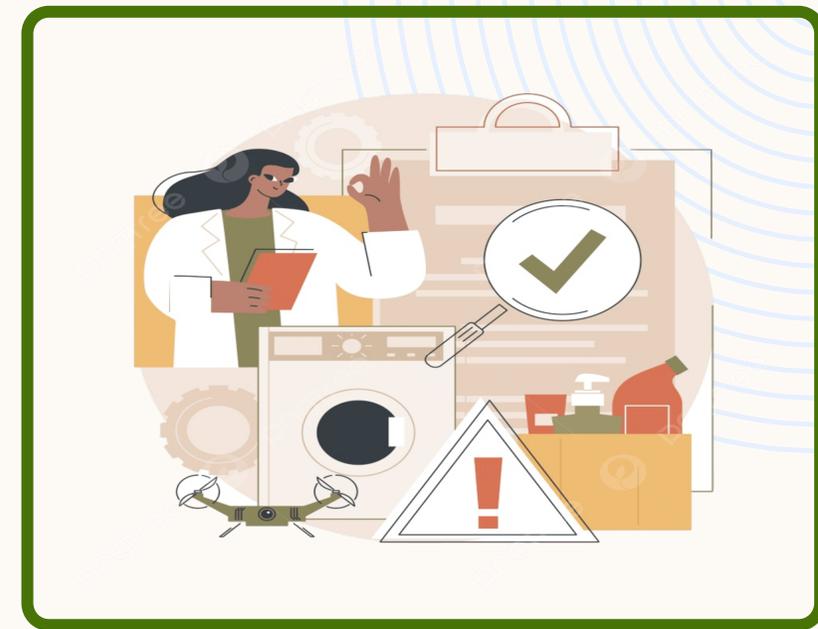


NOTE FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

In module 2 you will focus on mental health issues associated with resettlement and trauma and available treatments and services. During the module remember...

- **Use the family vocabulary**, not clinical language to talk about the effects of the refugee experience.
- It may be easier for families to **voice questions or concerns** once provided with concrete action plans.
- **Listen for and address issues** regarding stigma around mental health.
- **Take thorough notes** in your workbook throughout the session.

DISCUSSING THE FACTS



In this section you will....

- Discuss the challenges the family has faced with resettlement
 - What do you understand about resettlement stressors in general?
 - Do you have any questions about how resettlement can affect your family?
 - Are there things that are unclear to you that we could discuss together about resettlement?
- Provide the family with information about the emotional response to resettlement.



Facts on Resettlement

- Resettlement can cause long-term problems that require treatment.
- There are common reactions BUT everyone responds to resettlement differently.

Challenges

- Language barriers
- Trouble navigating the U.S. education system.
- Financial strain due to lack of employment opportunities.
- Difficult to find safe & affordable housing.
- Barriers to obtaining health services.
- Limited transportation
- Gap between child and parent accumulation speed.
- Anger, depression, anxiety, overwhelmed, powerlessness

Benefits

Job, citizenship, better education & healthcare, equal rights, new opportunities, children have a better future

Children Response

- Depends on age, support, & family environment
- Negative reactions (school problems; sad, anxious, irritable; trouble connecting & getting along with others)

What Helps?

- Being part of a larger community
 - Positive communication within the family
 - Seeking outside help from social services
- 

SYMPTOMS THAT MAY ACCOMPANY ADJUSTMENT TO RESETTLEMENT

- Depressed and/ or anxious mood
- Decreased interest/pleasure in activities
- Feelings of worthlessness and despair
- Diminished ability to concentrate or indecisiveness
- Recurrent thoughts of death, dying or suicide
- Externalizing behavior in children

HOW RESETTLEMENT HAS AFFECTED THE FAMILY

Ask the family:

- When did you learn your family was going to resettle to the United States?
- What was it like to learn you were going to leave the refugee camp?
- What helped you through that time?
- How has resettlement affected your family life?

RECORD ANSWERS IN YOUR WORKBOOK

CHILDREN'S RESETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES

Ask the caregivers:

- How have the lives of your children changed? How did your children respond to coming to the United States?
- Are they teased or bullied by others? How do they react?
- Do they miss school or other activities because of resettlement challenges?

DISCUSSION: MANAGING THE STRESS IN FAMILY LIFE

- Can you share with me what you think causes stress in parenting and family life?
- What things do you think one can do to prevent or reduce stress?
- What do you usually do to cope with the stress of family or family life?
- Have you ever helped a child manage stress? What worked? What didn't work?

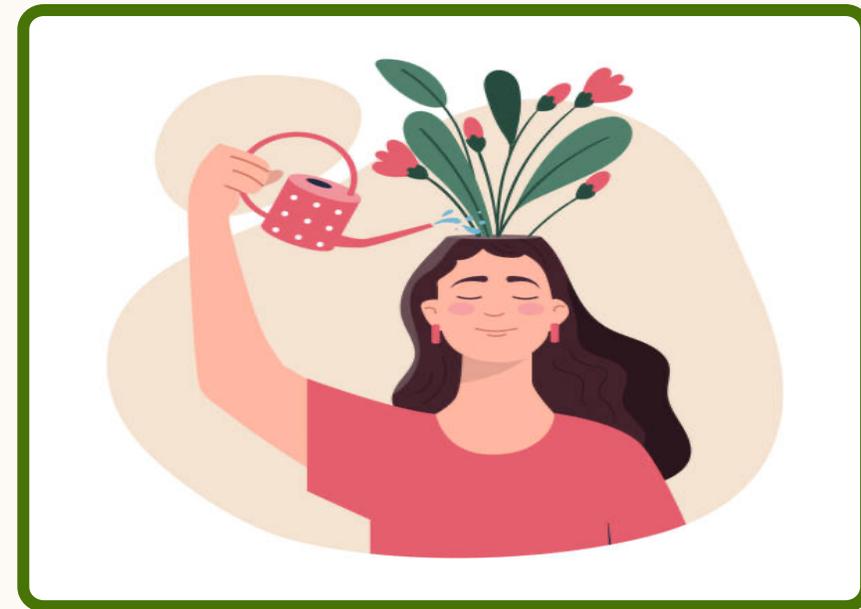
COPING WITH STRESS AND ITS EFFECTS

- **Stress is common.** It is normal to feel frustrated from time to time. However, it is important to cope with the stress in a healthy way so that it does not control the family life and cause problems.
- There are many sources of stress in family life including:
 - illnesses and/or death in the family,
 - not finding time to look after children,
 - financial hardship,
 - tense family relations,
 - work-related stress,
 - school and others.



COPING WITH STRESS AND ITS EFFECTS

- To reduce **avoid unhealthy behaviors** like aggression and increased drinking/smoking as these can cause problems in the home and negatively affect family relationships
- To calm yourself in stressful situation, try **healthy behaviors**, such as:
 - get enough sleep,
 - stay active/play,
 - try to think positively,
 - practice deep breathing techniques,
 - sing/dance,
 - pray/meditate alone or with family,
 - get support from friends and relatives,
 - cooking/gardening, etc.



HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH STRESS



- **Children feel stress too.** They can get stressed, especially when there is harsh punishment, abuse or conflict in the family.
- Threatening, hitting, and yelling at children are common things caregivers do to discipline their children.
- However, these do not help the children behave well. Instead, this makes the children scared of the caregiver and can affect their relationship.
- Also, it may cause children to think that it is okay to hit and yell at others and this can make their behavior worse.

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH STRESS

- Examples of healthy things parents can do to help children cope with stress include:
 - Making sure children adhere to a proper schedule and get enough sleep,
 - Encouraging children to stay active/play
 - Help children in thinking positively,
 - Practice deep breathing techniques with them,
 - Sing/dance with them,
 - Teach them how to pray/meditate, or pray/meditate with them,
 - Arrange playdates for them whenever possible,
 - Involve them in household chores like cooking/gardening,
 - And most importantly always leave room open for your children to come and share anything they want with you.

Discussion: Distress related to Resettlement

Distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distress refers to mental or physical discomfort. The psychological symptoms of distress include but are not limited to malaise, anxiety and depression. It can present itself in the form of lethargy, headaches, a feeling of doom, or feeling worthless, and in severe cases lead to depression or anxiety disorders.
Common Reactions from going through Traumatizing Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constant fear and anxiety - feeling jumpy, shaky, easily startled• Unwanted thoughts, memories, nightmares or images of the trauma• Avoiding situations, people, or places that remind you of the trauma• Trouble concentrating or sleeping• Problems getting along with others and isolation• Self-medicating and other unhealthy behaviors• Denial of trauma
Common Feelings/ Thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impatience, anger, and irritability → I cannot trust anyone• Numbness and lack of emotions → I am going crazy• Guilt and shame → I am bad, damaged, or weak• Grief, depression, and hopelessness → The world is bad and dangerous• Survivor's guilt → I shouldn't have made it out when other's didn't•
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doctors, nurses, and social workers at health centers, hospitals, or schools• Family, friends, and community

DISCUSS FAMILY'S COPING

Ask the family:

- How do you support your children with being in a resettlement-affected family?
- Can you think of other things you can do to support your children?
- How does your family (especially your children) stay strong despite being affected by resettlement?
- What resources do you need to help your child? What resources do your children need?

DISCUSS FAMILY'S COPING - REMINDERS

- The challenge of resettlement doesn't mean that the family cannot be happy and function well.
- Children can thrive and do well in school, home, and in the community.
- Their children have bright futures.
- They can have successful caregiver-child relationships
- The family can support each other and grow stronger together.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

FAMILY COPING

How can we phrase and express these reminders
to the family?



SUGGESTED TEXT

FAMILY STRENGTHS

❖ *“After resettlement, families can raise healthy children and do well together using family strengths and community. Our job is to help identify and build your strengths and your children’s strengths. In a strong family:*

- *There is an open communication between parents and children*
- *All members work together to solve family problems*
- *Every member in the family has a supportive environment to succeed in what they are doing. For example, a favorable home environment for a child to study*
- *Members of the family mutually respect each other*
- *Everyone’s ideas are respected and discussed”*

FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

- What does **resilience** mean to you?
- How, if at all, do Afghans think and talk about resilience in their family and community?
- How can you explain resilience to a child?



**UPCOMING CHILD
MEETING**



DISCUSS UPCOMING CHILD MEETING (MODULE 3)

- Explain that this meeting is a central part of the intervention
- Explain goals of the meeting:
 - Learn more about the children, work on their own narrative timeline
 - Understand the children's experience of family resettlement
- Review content with caregivers so they are comfortable with the meeting



What concerns and worries might the caregivers have and how can you best reassure them?

DISCUSS UPCOMING CHILD MEETING

- Review which children will be involved
- Ask caregivers for ideas regarding how to make their children comfortable during the meeting
 - Topics the child enjoys discussing
 - Topics to avoid
 - What props (e.g., snacks, toys) would be helpful
- Ask parents if they are comfortable with you talking with their child about resettlement and resilience
- Assure confidentiality

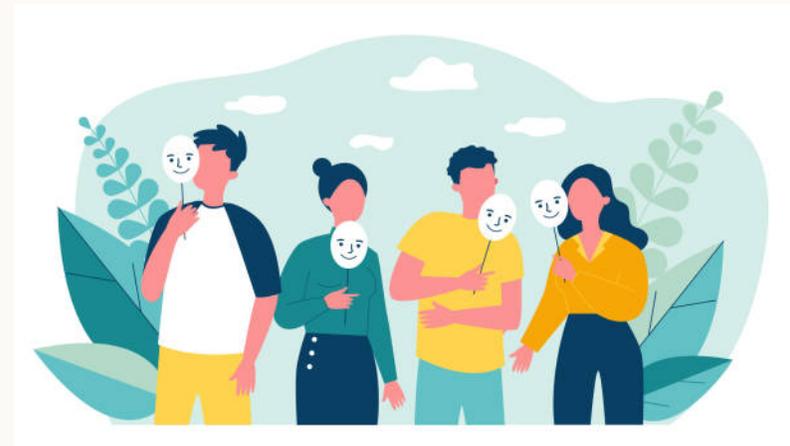
KEY TAKE AWAYS FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

- **Show how to build on family strengths.**
 - Help new interventionists guide families to recognize what they're already doing well.
- **Teach how to set goals together with families.**
 - Emphasize working with families, not for them, to build trust and strong relationships.
- **Share simple coping tools for stress.**
 - Provide easy-to-use strategies that families can use to handle challenges during resettlement.

ROLE PLAY

FAMILY STRENGTHS & GOALS

- Get into groups of three and decide who will be the caregivers and the interventionist
- In front of the group practice successfully discussing family strengths and goals.
- The group will offer suggestions and praise
- Reflect





Q & A