

MODULE 8
COACHING CAREGIVERS ON
COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN



MODULE 8

Theme:

Coaching Caregivers on Communicating with Children

Materials:

- **Interventionist Workbook** (*Module 8 Log*)
- **Interventionist Manual**
- Pens/markers

OVERVIEW: MODULE 8

- Check-In
- Review the Family Strengths and Goals
- Review the Child Module 3
- Navigating Coeducation and American Dating Culture
- Responding Well to Hard Questions
- Building Resilience
 - Strategies for Building Strong Families
- Review Communication and Problem-Solving Skills
- Family Meeting Preparation
- Role play Family Meeting
- Check-Out

NOTE FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

MODULE 8

- Remember to read over your notes before this Module to make sure that all important topics are included on the Family Meeting agenda. Focus on family strengths and challenges
- Give caregivers a leadership role in the Family Meeting.
- Review parental strengths
- When you finish this module, read the Family Meeting agenda. Think about topics that might be challenging and how you will help the family.
- It is encouraged, but not required, that the participants discuss a resettlement-related issue during the family meeting. If the participant does not want to discuss it, the interventionist should make a note of why.



TIME FOR REVIEW

**REVIEW: FAMILY STRENGTHS
AND GOALS & CHILD MODULE**

REVIEW: FAMILY STRENGTHS AND GOALS

- Use your notes on the Family Strengths and Goals to remind the family of 2-3 strengths and goals they came up with
- You can try to tie this in with their resettlement experience:
 - Example: “You previously identified that one of your strengths is your adaptability. This strength helped you gain resilience through the changes you experienced with resettlement.

REVIEW: CHILD MODULE

- This session uses the meeting with the children, which the caregivers did not attend. Caregivers may want to hear about the children.
- Remind caregivers of confidentiality rules. You can't share the conversation without the children's permission, unless there is a safety issue.
- Talk about possible fears and uncertainties about discussing their experiences with the children. Take good notes of caregivers' concerns in the Workbook.
- Support caregivers and encourage them by saying: "Despite all these challenges, look at how well you are doing. Life continues."

SUGGESTED TEXT

REVIEW CHILD MODULE



“In an earlier session, we spoke with your children about their strengths and goals. We discussed their individual strengths and goals and the strengths and goals their family has as a newly resettlement family. People can lead productive lives even if it is difficult to start a new life in a new country.” Then talk about possible family fears:

❖ **Fear of not succeeding**

Try: “Resettled refugee families in the US often fear that they will not succeed. But many refugees have succeeded.”

❖ **Discrimination**

Try: “There have been times when refugees have been discriminated, and a lot of refugees fear that they will never be treated equally. There are places where you can get help , if you feel like you’re being discriminated. They are there to prevent unethical practices.”



SUGGESTED TEXT

REVIEW CHILD MODULE

❖ **Bullying**

Try: “Sometimes, due to not having a good grasp on English or having different food or clothing, refugee children experience bullying from other children in their community or schools. Bullying is never okay. There are things you can do to take action to stop bullying. Parents can help a lot by talking with their kids if they ever experience bullying, and by taking action if they do. For instance, in the past, when some of the families we have worked with have had children experience bullying in the public schools, they contacted school leadership (principal or assistant principal) and the bullying stopped. If you are not comfortable in being able to communicate with the school, it can be helpful to ask your home visitor to write an email, or get an interpreter to make a call to the principal’s office.”



SUGGESTED TEXT

REVIEW CHILD MODULE

❖ ***Fear of losing culture***

Try: “A lot of people, especially refugee parents, are afraid of losing touch with their own culture once they are in the US. Many parents fear that their children will adopt foreign culture and ignore their own. But families can work together to keep their cultural values. Teaching children the value and importance of culture will help them better understand their culture and be a part of it.”



In what cases is it okay to break confidentiality?

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH CONFIDENTIALITY MUST BE BROKEN



- In case of child sexual abuse or severe violence, the interventionist should tell the participant that to make sure that everyone in the FSI is safe, the interventionist must break confidentiality to protect the participants.
- The interventionist should follow these steps:
 1. Inform the supervisor
 2. Tell him/her to inform the police
 3. Make sure that supervisor tells the police to request medical expertise from the health center. At that point, your role as an interventionist is finished.

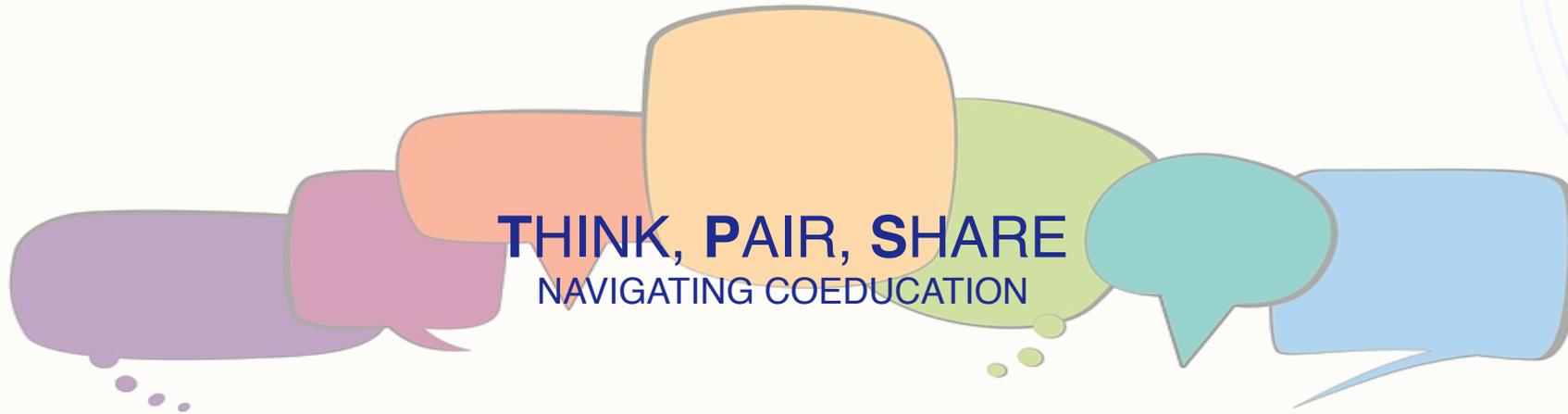
FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION



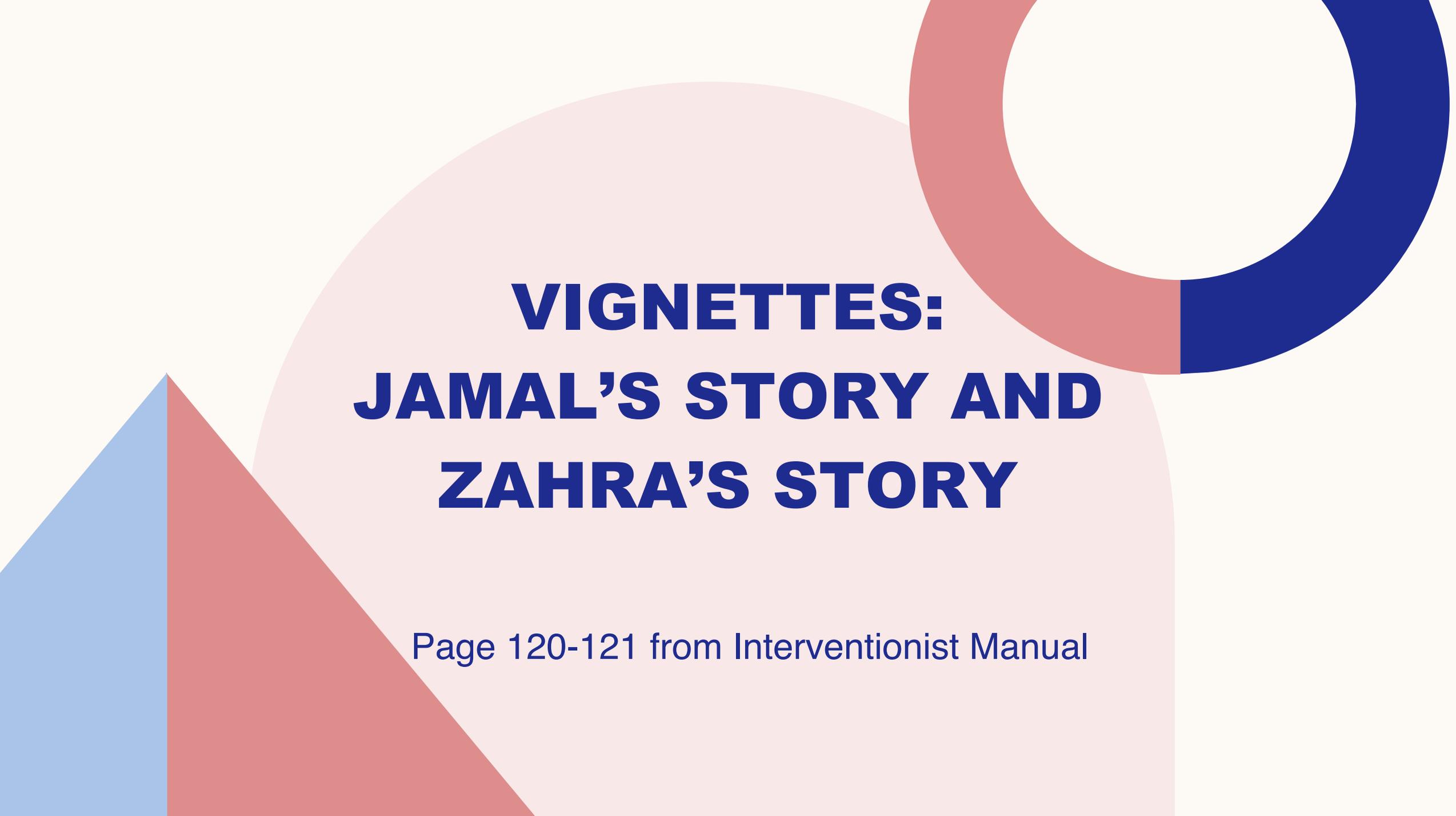
- What did you learn from Module 3 and Module 7?
- What did you learn from the FSI-R so far
- What did you hear from your children so far through Module 3, Module 7, and the Intervention Review?

NAVIGATING COEDUCATION





- Etiquettes around male-female interactions will come up, especially if your children are in high school.
- Parents can guide their children a lot by helping them set appropriate boundaries and be respectful of others.



VIGNETTES: JAMAL'S STORY AND ZAHRA'S STORY

Page 120-121 from Interventionist Manual

RESPONDING TO HARD QUESTIONS





What difficult questions might children ask caregivers during the family meeting?



SUGGESTED TEXT

RESPONDING TO HARD QUESTIONS

“What are the hardest questions you worry about answering? Have you had to answer some hard questions already? How was that experience? What was difficult about answering those questions?”

Here are some typical questions a child might have for parents when a family is affected by resettlement. Let’s talk about how you might respond if your child asked the following questions.

- *Are we going to stay in this country for the rest of our lives?*
- *If this is not our country, where is our country? Why did we leave our country?*
- *Are we going to be called refugees forever?*
- *Who made us refugees?*
- *Why does my school not have food like we eat at home?*
- *Are we ever going to have our own house?*



What are some possible strategies caregivers can use when responding to hard questions?

TIPS TO RESPONDING TO HARD QUESTIONS

- Stay calm and relaxed
- Stay positive
- Do not get defensive or try to push the question away
- Listen to what your child is telling you
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Respond in a way that is comfortable for you and your family
- It's okay if you don't know the answer right away, but it's important that you respond in some way
- Remember that you are the most important person in your child's life

ACTIVITY: RESPONDING TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

- Have caregivers practice using the communication skills they discussed
- Have caregivers perform several role plays using vignettes or common situations
- You may want to go first, acting as a model
- Make sure to praise caregivers for their efforts
- Have caregivers help one another to brainstorm different ways of responding to difficult questions or scenarios.
- Record these responses in the Workbook.

**BUILDING
RESILIENCE
&
STRONG FAMILIES**





What is resilience and why is it important for refugee families?

RESILIENCE

- Building family trust, patience, self-esteem, good parenting, and community support help create resilience.
- To build family trust, families can do short, enjoyable, active things together.
- Ask parents what simple and inexpensive activities they enjoy doing. Make a list of these activities in your Workbook.
- Ask parents to think about how to add these activities into their life.



What strategies can caregivers use to strengthen their family?

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

- Resilient families have good **social support**.
 - **Social Support for Parents:** close relationships with friends, relatives, priests/pastors/imams, neighbors, community leaders, health workers
 - **Social Support for Children:** close relationships with parents, teachers, religious leaders, older siblings, friends
 - Ask parents to list current supports, social support to rebuild, and new relationships that they could build.
- **Good Parenting** is important for resilience. Ask parents/caregivers to talk about their own parenting strengths.
- **Self-care** is important for resilience. Help families to think of ways to reduce stress
- Resilient children have **good self-esteem and self-understanding**. Parents should help children understand events and behaviors related to resettlement.

FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION



How has the refugee and resettlement experience affected the resilience and strength of Afghan families?

COMMUNICATION & PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS





What is important for good communication?

COMMUNICATION SKILLS



When you are the listener:

- Be respectful and wait to talk or ask questions until the speaker is finished.
- Try to understand the speaker. You don't need to agree but you can still listen well.
- Look at the speaker and smile. You can also nod when you agree with what the speaker says.

When you are the speaker:

- Make eye contact with your listeners.
- Speak confidently, clearly and slowly.
- **IMPORTANT:** Use I-statements for sensitive topics



What is important to remember when solving a problem.

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

- Try to understand the problem
- Think about possible solutions
- Think about pros and cons of each option
- Choose an option and try it. See if it worked. If not, choose another

Using these skills have the caregivers role play one of the topics of the family meeting.

FAMILY MEETING PREPARATION





The family meeting will require discussing difficult challenges and events with the family. This might feel uncomfortable or different. How can you explain to caregivers that it is okay to feel this way and remind them of the skills they learned in the modules? Prepare a sample text.



SUGGESTED TEXT

PREPARING FOR FAMILY MEETING

“Your kids seeing you participate will be very helpful, even if you disagree about some things. Some things have been part of the children’s experiences (e.g., living in a refugee camp) and should be talked about. If there are things that the children were not part of, then you can choose if you want to talk about them. There are many ways to introduce these topics, we can decide together how to talk about it.”



What topics should be included in the agenda? What should you remember when helping caregivers build the agenda?

NOTE FOR INTERVENTIONISTS

BUILDING AN AGENDA

- **Keep the agenda short.** Include:
 - Things the child saw (e.g., parents' arguments). Things the child does not know (e.g., how a parent became a refugee) are optional.
 - Stressful things that the children have recently experienced.
 - Topics that both caregivers and children agree are important and feel comfortable discussing.
 - Topics that the children want to talk about (if permission was granted).
- **Respect boundaries in the family.** Leave time for caregivers to ask questions. Remind them that their children may be equally uncomfortable discussing difficult experiences.
- **Discuss the order of the agenda topics,** who will lead the Family Meeting, and who will lead each topic.
- **Remind caregivers that no Family Meeting is perfect,** and that the agenda can change.



SUGGESTED TEXT

PREPARING FOR FAMILY MEETING

“During the Family Meeting, we will talk about a couple of topics I understand that some topics are difficult to talk about, but let’s find a resettlement-related topic or an event in the family’s history that you think is important to share with your children. We can practice the topics before the meeting if you want.”

ROLE PLAY

COMMUNICATION & PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS DURING THE FAMILY MEETING

- Role play
 - How to prepare for the family meeting
 - Skills they need for better communication and problem-solving skills during the family meeting
- Offer feedback and reflect





Q & A