

Lesson Plan: “The Hand You Hold Is the Legacy You Leave - Building Loving Connections”

Purpose

To help parents and caregivers understand the importance of love, safety and security, acceptance, and support in building strong attachment relationships with their babies and young children.

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. Understand what secure attachment is and why it matters.
2. Recognize everyday ways to build love, safety and security, acceptance, and support.
3. Reflect on their own parenting strengths and identify new ideas to try with their child(ren).

Session Outline

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 - 10 minutes)
 - Greet participants and introduce the topic.
 - Ask: “When you think about what helps babies feel loved and safe, what comes to mind?”
 - Briefly explain that today’s session is based on *The Hand You Hold Is the Legacy You Leave* booklet, which shares research and practical actions for parents. Show the digital resource or share printed copies with participants.
2. Exploring the Key Themes (15 minutes)
 - Introduce the main needs of children: Love, Safety and Security, Acceptance.
 - Display or read one quote or page from each section of the booklet.
 - Facilitate group discussion:
 - “What does this mean to you as a parent or caregiver?”
 - “How do you show love (or safety and security, or acceptance) in your everyday routines?”
3. Action Reflection Activity (15 - 20 minutes)
 - Divide participants into pairs or small groups.
 - Give each group one theme (i.e., Love, Safety and Security, or Acceptance).
 - Ask participants to:
 - Review the “Actions for Parents” for their theme.
 - Discuss one action they already do and one they want to try.
 - Bring everyone back to share highlights.
4. Self and Community Care Discussion (10 minutes)
 - Read the *Support* section from the booklet.
 - Ask participants the following questions:
 - “How do you take care of yourself so you can be there for your child?”
 - “Who or what supports you most in your parenting role?”
 - Emphasize that caring for oneself and having community support strengthen attachment.
 - Share information about local community resources.

5. Wrap-Up and Takeaway (5 minutes)

- Summarize key messages:
 - Babies thrive through love, safety and security, and acceptance; parents thrive when they are supported.
 - Consistent, everyday actions make a big difference.
 - Parents don't have to be perfect - being present and responsive matters most.
- In the group, ask the following reflection questions:
 - What did you notice or learn about attachment?
 - What did you become aware of for yourself?
 - How can you share this information with others?
- Encourage parents to take the booklet home and reflect on one new action they'll try this week.

Take-Home Activity:

Invite participants to trace their hand and write one of the following words on each finger: Love, Safety, Acceptance, Support, and Self-care.

In the palm of their hand, have participants write specific actions they can take to build attachment with their child based on these words.