



Trust, caring and respect in positive parent-child relationships in the information cycle key in harmonious family.

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After sixty days of lockdown, the International Day of the Family shines as a beacon of hope to all of us at home. This year, the celebration will be held in lockdown under the theme “*harmonious family: a key to sustainable peace and development.*” As parents and as children, the novel COVID-19 has treated us to an overload of information, given us family time, and an opportunity to bond not only between partners but more importantly the bond between parents and children.

This lockdown has taken us back to the first place where the family is seen as the primary unit for education, socialization of values, provision, development of a moral and ethical compasses. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) through the department of Family and Culture and her partners have used the media platform to provide relevant information for child-parent bonding and these include; parenting tips on how to keep positive during difficult times; supporting children to consistently plan for the daily routines; budgeting with family to minimize over expenditure; family harmony at home; managing anger; play time among others.

This lockdown in so many ways has been the saving grace for many families for both rural and urban parents. We have shifted the paradigm from absentee fathers to fathers actively parenting and playing with their children and

understanding them more, we have seen mothers and fathers share in the chores at home with the continued directive from the president to stay home for and develop a structure for children. There is reduction in alcoholism and spending time out of the home and this has enabled parents to work more in their farmland which will in the long run increase family resilience in terms of food security. Parents have set up routines to help keep their children happy, playing, involved in house work, skilled, and overall created harmony between families.

In the era of globalization and the world becoming one, parents need to consciously make value-based choices for the children and the choice on access to information is no different. It is of great importance for parents to make a deliberate effort to protect children from information up-take and provide time to talk with children trying to understand what is important to them and especially for the teenagers and younger adults allow them some independence to relate with their peers. Done successfully, it will reduce on family quarrels, feeling lonely and left out and yet an opportunity to regulate, censor and ensure children get age appropriate information.

A father from the Parenting Programme, which is championed by the MGLSD, explained how their family harmony and relationship improved after attending the



programme.

“It is true there has been some changes in everything by attending the programme as delivered by our facilitators especially for us who joined as a couple. For me and my wife, the Parenting Programme has helped us to change our behaviour since we are able to track our mistakes as individuals and able to advise each other.” 41 year father



Parents and children benefit from being “heard and understood,” it is critical that parents have conversations about how information shared on media might affect them. Developing this line of thinking from an early age prepares children to manage their own behaviours while using media information as they grow. Adolescents this time need more understanding to form their identity and reduce personal internal conflicts.

A 13 year old girl describes how her mother builds a relationship and impart skills in them.

“When mother comes back, she comes along with eatables and gives us. When she is cooking, she invites us to cook along with her. The third thing is that she disciplines us when we do something wrong. And both mother and father are strict on all of us, sometimes when you want to move around, they sometimes accept or reject”. End-line data collected from parenting programme



Positive parent-child relationships are built during quality time. Time together is how you get to know about each other's experiences, thoughts, feelings and changing

interests. This is great for your relationship with your child and a great way to see and hear the information they have. This cannot be achieved if the family has no peace among themselves as the theme for this year's International Day of the Family. Among the activities done by the MGLSD-department of Family and Culture has developed the Family Guidelines with simple illustrations to help parents achieve quality time and bond with their children. In addition, the MGLSD, through the work of the Parenting Agenda for Uganda, which is a collaboration between the MGLSD and Child Health and Development Centre brings together partners doing family strengthening work in the country. Members of the Agenda deliberate on workable solutions to support families stay together and achieve harmony. Men Engage, one of the partners has had several presentations and virtual meetings during the lock down to try and draw fathers back to their God given roles to enrich family relationships.

There's no formula for getting parent-child relationship right, and there'll be times when it's hard to relate to your child the way you want to. But the MGLSD through working with partners is making deliberate efforts to help parents search for workable formulas in their individual families. Child Health and Development Centre – Makerere University through funds from OAK Foundation, has supported the translation of parenting tips to ensure that they are widely disseminated and understood by parents to support parent – child relationship.

2 COVID-19 Okukuza n'okuleera abaana Okusigala nga olina esubi

Kizibu okuwulira obulungi ng'abaana baffe abato oba abavubuuka batufula ng'abalalu. Ebiseera ebisinga twesanga tugamba "lekeerawo okukola ekyo!" Naye abaana basoboolera ddala okukola kyetubasaba, singa tubawa amateeka amalungi n'okubawana ku lw'ebituufu by'ebaba bakooze.

Ba'buulire enneyisa gy'oyagala okulaba

Kozessa ebigambo ebrungi ng'obulira omwana wo kyalina okukola okugeza nga, bambi gyawo engoye zo. Mukifo ky'okugamba "tokyankalanya bintu."

Byonna bisenziira ku'ngeri gyogusa ensoonga

Omwana wo muwane bwaba nga yeyizisa bulungi

Gezzako okuwaana omwana oba omuvubuuka wo olwekyo kyakooze obulungi. Bayinza obutakikulaga, naye ogya kulaba nga badamu okukola ekintu kyeekimu ekirungi. Era kino kigya kweyongera okubakakasa nti wekaanya ate ng'ofaayo.

Link: <https://www.covid19parenting.com/tips-in-other-languages>

As a parent the honor falls on you to regulate the flow of information, use of the social media platforms and more. Therefore, as we celebrate “harmonious family: a key to sustainable peace and development”, Let's influence positive parent-child relationships and contribute to creating a world where children are safe and secure, feel loved, because at the end of the day parents are their heroes and like a hero, children look up to their parents and take innovation and lesson from them. This will contribute to sustainable development.

For more details, contact

Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development

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