



CONSORTIUM

on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood
for the Prevention of Violence

TOOLKIT

Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years

A Contribution to the Protection of Children from
Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-
Being

Training of Trainers – Coimbatore, India
21st – 25th August, 2023

DAY 1

International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood

Created in
2018

Follow up of
the GNRC
5th Forum



Brings together civil society and faith-based organizations, religious communities, multilateral organizations, academia and individual experts to foster collaboration, share good practises and develop evidence-based and innovative approaches to integrate values-based education and spirituality in early childhood for the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

Members of the International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood



- A collaborative process
- Continuous reflections
- Roundtable discussions with religious leaders
- Literature reviews
- Bringing together religious leaders and experts on child protection and early childhood, and educationalists



A set of action booklets were designed in 2019 to raise awareness about the importance of children's well-being during the early years, and the support needed from parents, caregivers, educators, and the community to provide nurturing care.



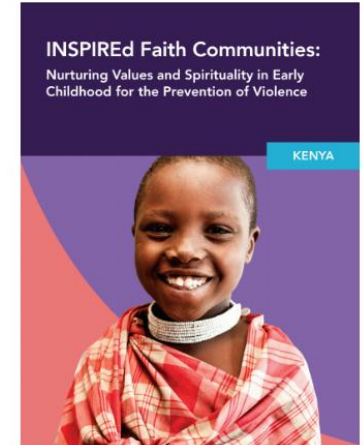
Brazil

English
Portuguese



India

English



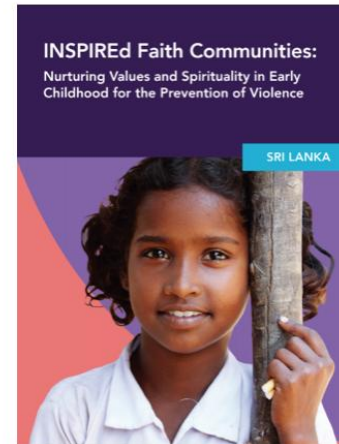
Kenya

English



Lebanon

English
Arabic



Sri Lanka

English
Sinhalese
Tamil



The Toolkit aims to help equip faith actors to engage actively in the protection of children from violence in early childhood and the promotion of children's holistic well-being by supporting parents, caregivers, educators and communities to nurture children's spiritual development and take an active role in addressing violence in early childhood.

Objectives

1

Create awareness about the importance of the spiritual development of children as a central aspect of their holistic development in the early years.

2

Develop evidence on how to nurture the spiritual development of children to contribute to their protection from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

3

Work with faith communities to support parents, educators and caregivers to nurture the spiritual development of children promoting cultural norms that affirm the dignity of the child and challenge those that condone violence.

4

Develop tools to support parents, educators and caregivers to nurture the spiritual development of children.

Systematic implementation



2023 - 2025



Objectives

1. Understand the importance of the spiritual development of children for their holistic development and well-being, and identify ways it can contribute to the protection of children from violence in the early years when incorporated into new or existing programs operated by the organisation
2. Apply the Conceptual Framework and Learning Program of the Toolkit to design, deliver, and plan programs that equip parents, caregivers and/or educators to nurture the spiritual development of children in the early years
3. Demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to conduct programs with children to nurture their spiritual development that are customised to their cultural, religious and spiritual backgrounds
4. Be familiar with M&E tools to assess the success of programs.

Agenda

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
7:20		Arrival to go on interfaith visit			
8:45-9:00	Arrival time	Departure from Shanti Ashram at 7:30	Arrival time	Arrival time	Arrival time
9:00-10:30	Interfaith prayer Welcome and preparing for the workshop & Getting to know each other	Interfaith visit 08.45am 'Coming together for Unity' to St.Michael's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Town hall o Interfaith Prayer led by Shanti Ashram Staff o 'Welcome & Objectives' o 'Visit to church' o Departure to Arulmigu Koniamman Temple, Town hall 09.30am 'Walking together' at the Arulmigu Koniamman Temple, Town hall 10.15am 'Meeting together' in the Athar Jamaath Masjid, Town Hall 11.00am 'Praying together' at the Gurudwara Singh Sabha, R S Puram 11.45noon 'Observing silence' at the Suparaswanath Jain Temple, R.G.Street, Townhall 12.30pm Community Lunch 1.30pm Wrap up Session 5: Understanding My Spirituality Session 6: My Spiritual Well-Being	Recap and morning reflection	Recap and morning reflection	Guided simulation
10:30-11:00	Morning break		Introducing Module 3 and the Conditions for Nurturing Spiritual Development	Session 10: Exploring Activities for Children	
11:00-11:30	Introduction to priorities and organisational expectations		Morning break	Morning break	
11:30-12:00	Introducing the Toolkit and its components		Session 7: Nurturing Positive Relationships Between Parents, Caregivers, Educators and Children	Adult learning styles, approach, process and methodologies	Visit to Gandhi Museum
12:00-12:30					
12:30-13:00	Context session: The realities of children in India			Introduction to the guided simulation	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14:00-14:30	Session 1: The Dignity of the Child & Child Rights	Session 3: Spiritual Development of Children	Session 8: Safe Environments	Preparation for guided simulation	Implementation plans Monitoring & Evaluation (30 minutes)
14:30-15:00					
15:00-15:15					
15:15-15:45	Afternoon break	Afternoon break	Afternoon break	Afternoon break	
15:45-16:30	Session 2: Early Childhood and the Holistic Development and Well-Being of Children	Session 4: Violence Against Children	Session 9: Empowering Experiences	Guided simulation	Afternoon break
16:30-17:00					Evaluation of the workshop
17:00-17:30	Learning circle	Learning circle	Learning circle	Learning circle	Closing session
18.15-19.15	Cultural evening- Building peace with children-Artistic presentation by the children of shanti Ashram		Bharatanatyam Exploring an ancient art form Shree Natya Niketan School of Dance with guru and her Students	Music night -At KCT	

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WEEK

THE TWO HATS

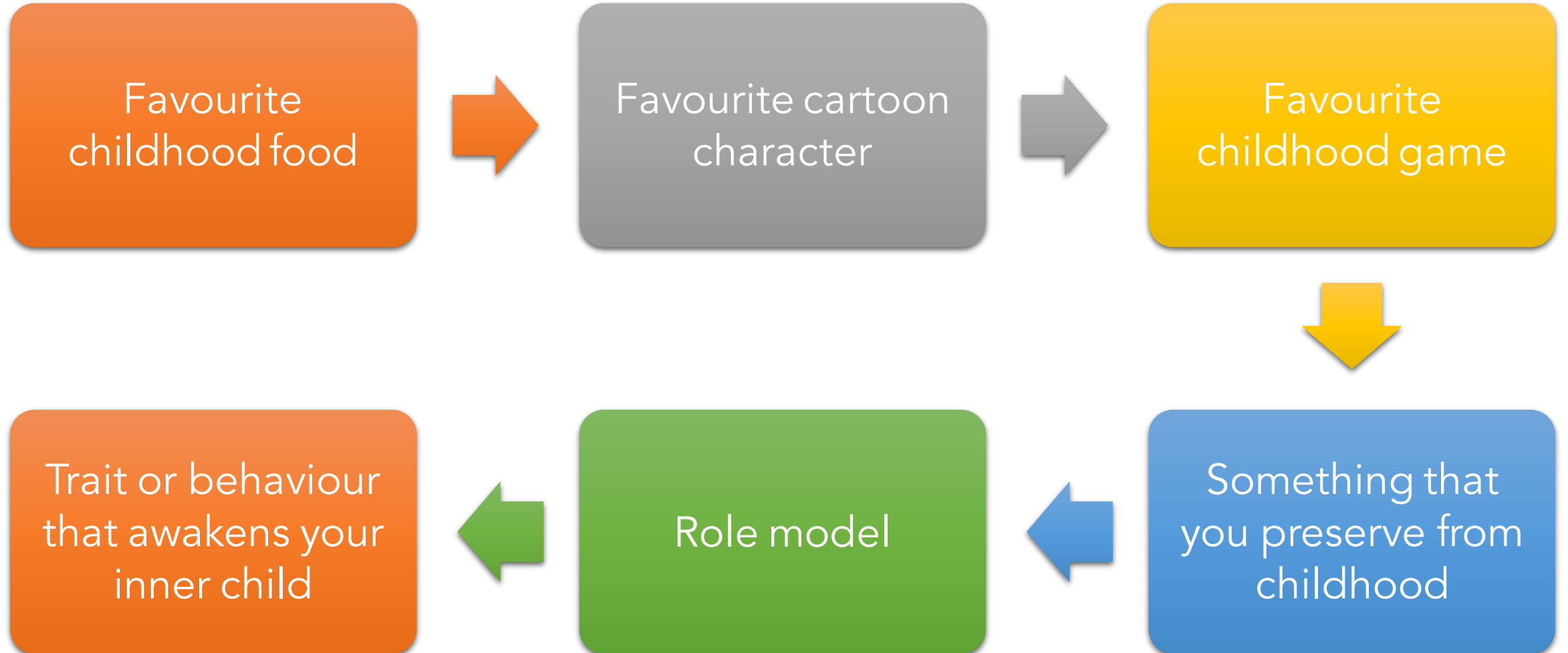
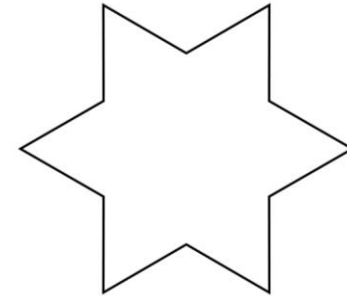


PARTICIPANT

TRAINER/TEACHER

**GETTING TO KNOW
EACH OTHER**

Reach for the Stars



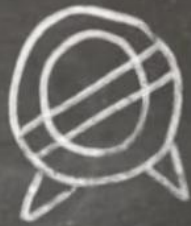
**SESSION 1:
THE DIGNITY OF THE
CHILD AND CHILD RIGHTS**



The Dignity of Child and Child Rights

U.N.
CONVENTION

*Rights
of the
Child*



SEGMENT 1:

What Are Children's Rights?

5:51

Objectives :

- Analyze children's rights and name methods of securing an environment that enables the realization, protection and development of children's rights and dignity in order to ensure their holistic well-being and support their spiritual development.





Why Children?

Every child is a promise, a sacred gift, a living sign of the future. The challenge before us is therefore how to empower children and enhance their innate ability for hopeful and positive living.

Why the child?

- 2.2 billion children in the world today
- Children as agents of social change
- Creation of a peaceful society only through children



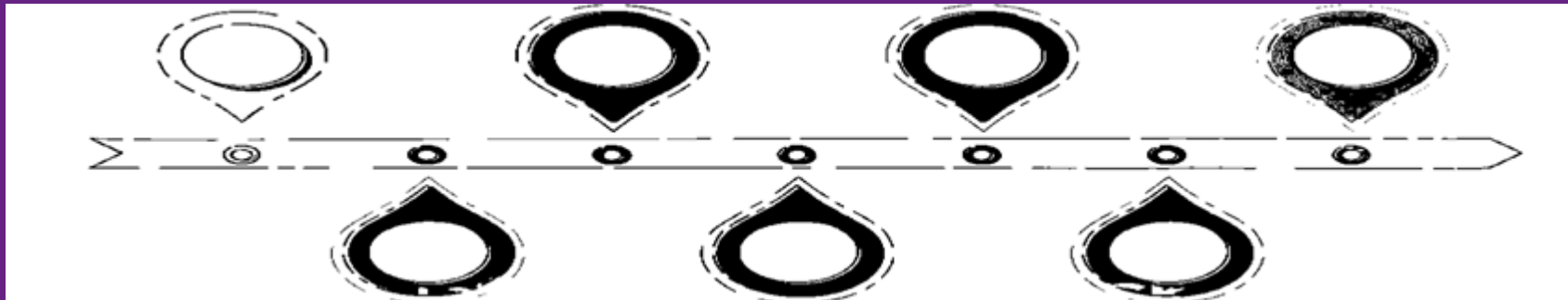
Timeline of how Convention on the Rights of the Child evolved

1924 Declaration of Geneva

1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child

1989 Convention on the Right of Children

1992 Child Rights in India



1924: In the year 1924 League of Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child which came to be known as the "Declaration of Geneva".

"Declaration of Geneva"

- Child must be given the means needed for its normal **development, both materially and spiritually.**
- **Hungry child should be fed;** sick child should be helped; erring child should be reclaimed; and the orphan and the homeless child should be sheltered and succored.
- Child must be put in a position to earn a livelihood and must be **protected against every form of exploitation.**

1959: The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child on 20 November,

Declaration of the Rights of the Child

- **Special protection, opportunities and facilities to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially** in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity.
- The **right to social security**, adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.
- The **differently-abled child** to be given special treatment education and care.
- The **need for love** and understanding so that the child grows in the care and responsibility of his/her parents, and in an atmosphere of affection and moral and material security.
- Entitlement to **education**, which should be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages.



1989: Convention on the Right of Children

The [United Nations](#) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC or UNCRC) is a [human rights treaty](#) which sets out the **civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children**. The Convention defines a child as any human being under the age of eighteen.

CRC signature on **20 November 1989**. It came into force on 2 September 1990. **Currently, 196 countries are party to**

- The four core principles of the Convention are **non-discrimination**; devotion to the best interests of the child; the **right to life, survival and development**; and respect for the views of the child.
- The Convention protects children's rights by setting standards in **health care; education; and legal, civil and social services**.

Child Rights

CRC – 54
Articles



ARTICLE 27:

Every child has a right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.



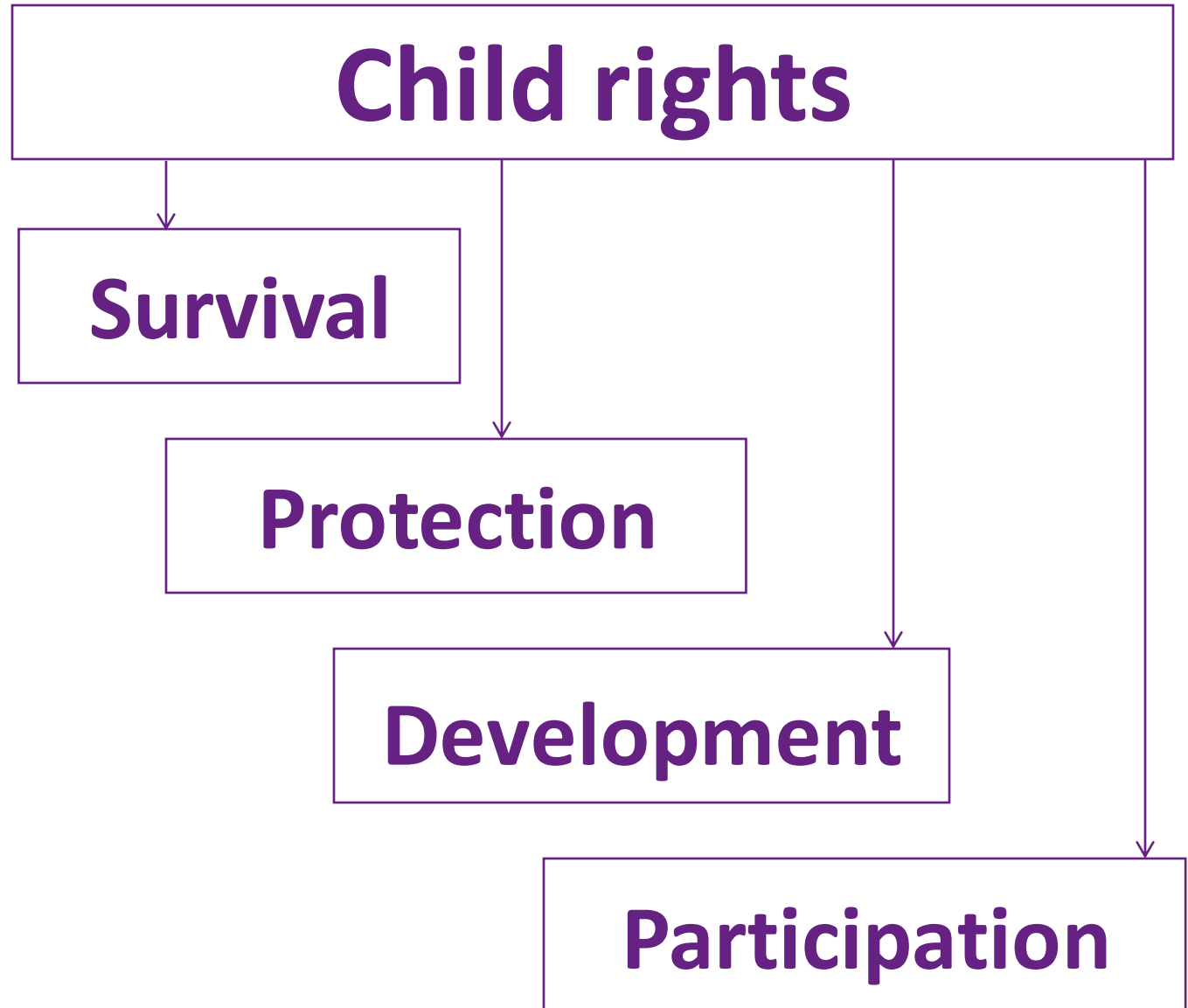
1992: Child Rights in India

- Ratification: **11 December 1992**, agreeing in principle to all articles except with certain reservations on issues relating to child labor.
- Children under the age of 18 should not work, but there is no outright ban on child labor, and the practice is generally permitted in most industries except those deemed "hazardous".
- Although a law in **October 2006** banned child labor in hotels, restaurants, and as domestic servants, there continues to be high demand for children as hired help in the home.



Child Marriage and Restraint Act 1979,
Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986

**Four Core
Principles for
holistic
development
of children**



'That our work for Children must combine ensuring rights and realizing responsibilities ... because children learn from living examples'



**SESSION 2:
EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE
HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT AND
WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN**

Reflection Questions

- What do you think our main responsibility is as parents, caregivers and educators in supporting holistic well-being?
- What is the role of communities in supporting children's holistic well-being?
- Who are the community actors that are engaged in providing nurturing care to children in the early years?
- How do our religious or spiritual traditions support parents and caregivers in nurturing children's spiritual well-being?

Holistic Child Development

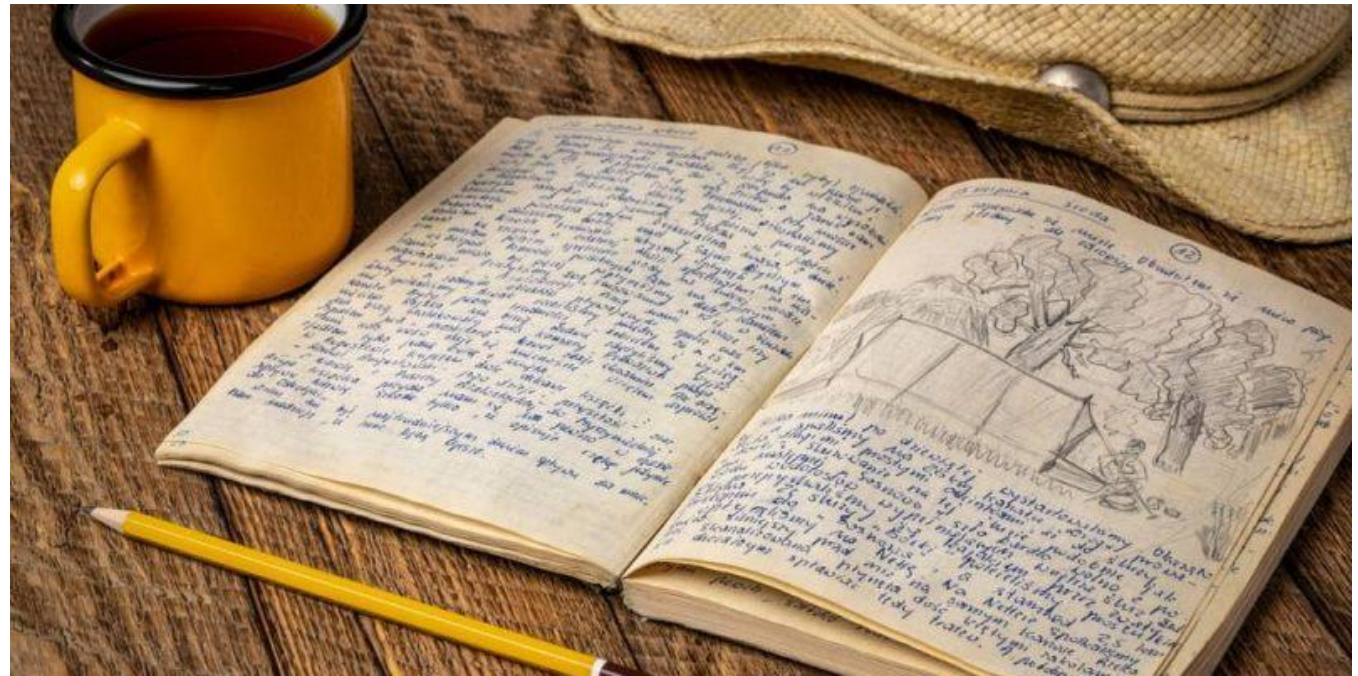


Nurturing Care Framework



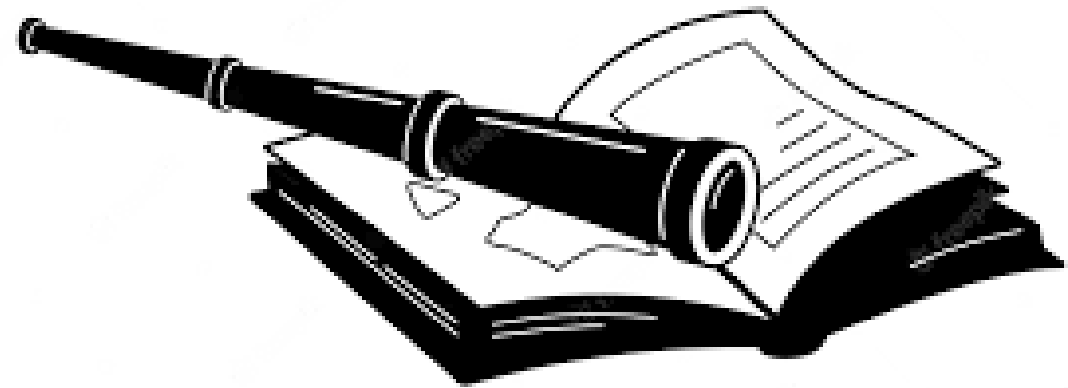
LEARNING CIRCLE

LEARNING LOG



LEARNING LOG

- A personal diary or journal
- It tells what we do in a trip or journey
- Reflections about learnings and observations about the experiences
- Chronological structure



LEARNING LOG

- What expectations do you have for the rest of the week?
- Is there something from today that particularly struck you? What is it and how will you use this learning?
- Think/draw/write a message or symbol to represent your learnings and day today

DAY 2

Interfaith visits

Religious and Spiritual Rituals in Early Childhood

Christianity

The disciples ask Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus replies, "Truly, I say to you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Buddhism

Parents and caregivers are called to practice the Dharma in their child-upbringing practices. In this practice of Dharma, our children become teachers as well, as the Buddha's teachings are transmitted in reciprocal relationships.

Sikhism

Many rituals are practiced to nurture the spirituality of the child. For example, the Anand Karand from the Sikh Holy Scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib Ji) during birth and immediately after.

Hinduism

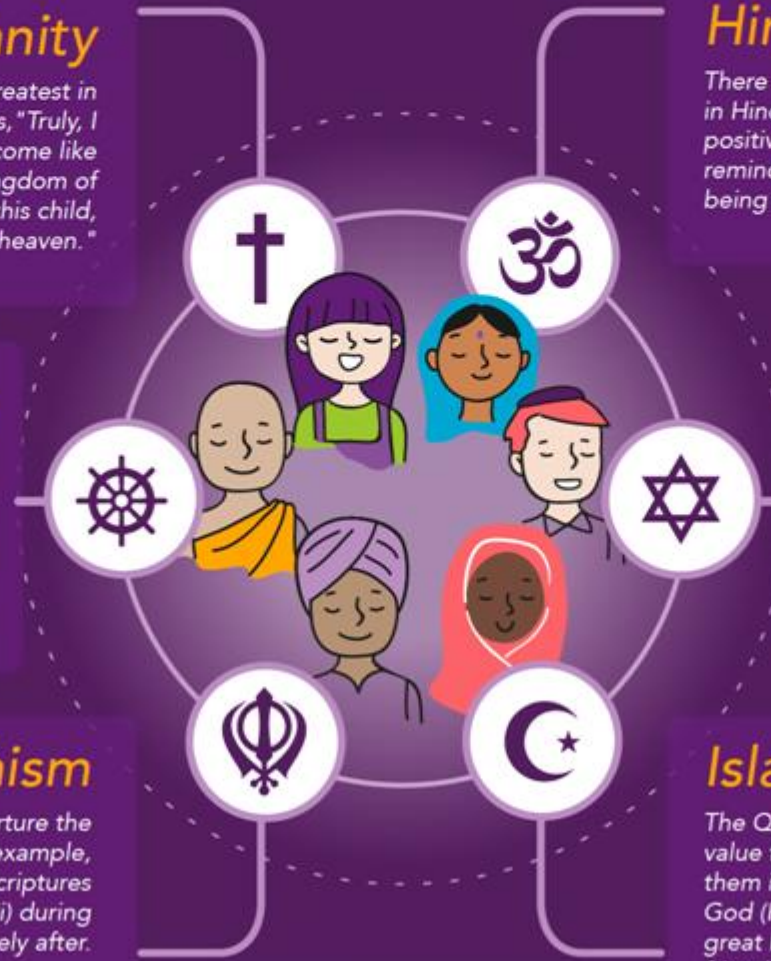
There are 16 samskaras (rites of passage) in Hinduism. The purpose is to create a positive impact on the child, and to remind adults that the child is a precious being to be treated with love and care.

Judaism

Children are blessed every Friday evening at the start of the Shabbat, the holiest day of the week for Jewish people.

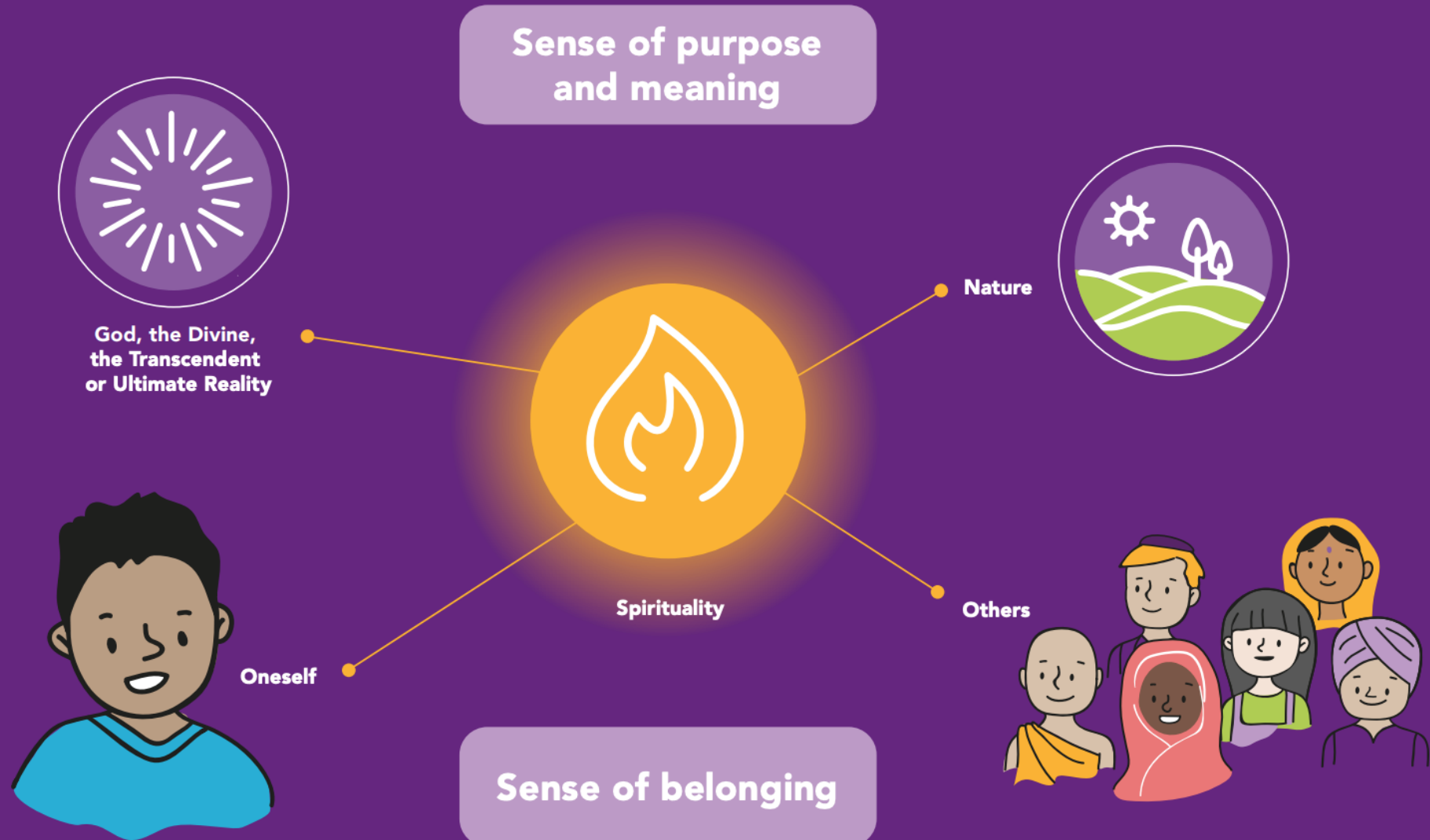
Islam

The Qur'an expresses the utmost love and value for children of all abilities, describing them in various ways: the child is a gift from God (Hiba), an adornment of life (Zeenah), a great blessing (Ni'imah) and a protector or friend who carries a legacy (Waleeh).



**SESSION 3:
SPIRITUAL
DEVELOPMENT OF
CHILDREN**

Towards an Understanding of Spirituality



Spirituality...



Is innate



Is multi-dimensional



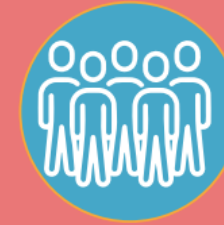
**Is an intrinsic
part of being human**



Cannot be imposed



**Is related to but not
confined to religion or faith**



**Is embedded in
relationships
and community**



**Is expressed in
ethical behaviour**



**Is transmitted
intergenerationally**



**Supports interreligious
learning and respect for
other religions or beliefs**

**SESSION 4:
VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN**

What are all the forms of violence that children may encounter between the ages of 0 to 8?

The most common forms of violence that children faces in the early years

❖ Physical

❖ Verbal

❖ Emotional

❖ Cognitive

❖ Spiritual

Role Play

Direct Violence

Bullying

Sexual violence

Neglect

Maltreatment

Emotional or
psychological violence



250 million
one year olds
(around 6 in 10)
are punished by
physical means.



Close to 300
million children
(3 in 4) aged 2 to 4 worldwide
experience violent discipline by their
caregivers on a regular basis.

Structural Violence



Extreme conditions

POVERTY, POLITICAL UNREST, FOOD INSECURITY, ETC.

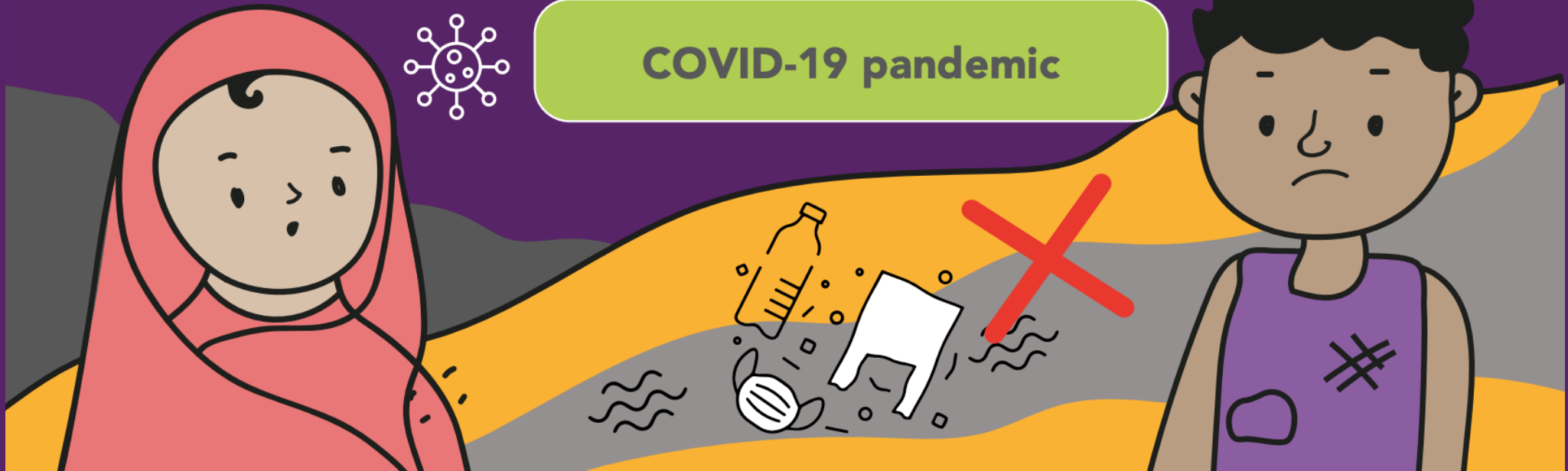


Climate change

CAUSING MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT



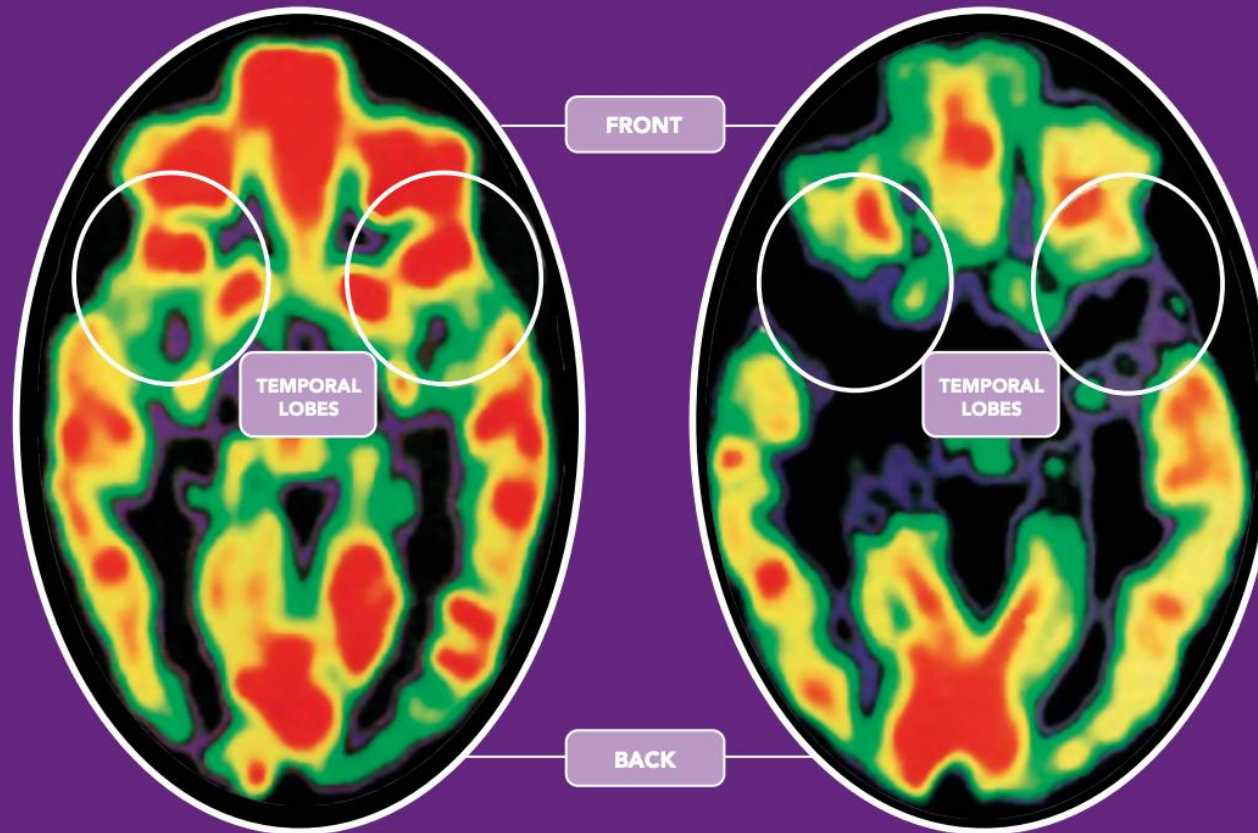
COVID-19 pandemic



Violence and its Impact on Child Development

Healthy Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.



This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian Orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from these senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.

Chugani, H. T., Behen, M. E., Muzik, O., Juhász, C., Nagy, F., Chugani, D. C., (2001). *Local brain functional activity following early deprivation: a study of post institutionalized Romanian orphans.*



LEARNING CIRCLE

Learning Log

- What have you discovered about your spirituality?
- What have you discovered about others' spirituality?
- What was your "aha" moment during today's visits?
- How will today help you connect more with children's spirituality?

DAY 3

INTRODUCING MODULE 3

Conditions to Nurture Children's Spiritual Development



Reflection Questions

- How are the three conditions connected?
- Can we nurture spiritual development if one of the conditions is missing? Why/why not?



**SESSION 7:
NURTURING POSITIVE
RELATIONSHIPS**

Revisit your childhood

Why Play

- How did you feel while playing?
- What did you enjoy the most? Why?
- What might hold educators/Parents back from playing with children? How can we overcome this?

Develop a toolbox of Games

**SESSION 9:
EMPOWERING
EXPERIENCES**

Reflection Questions

- What did you smell/touch/see hear? What feelings did it bring up? What thoughts did you have?
- How did you feel being in nature? What did you notice?
- Did contact with nature help you to connect spiritually?
- What kind of experiences do you see in the classroom, community or at home that allows children to:
 - Express themselves
 - Explore freely
 - Make decisions?

DAY 4

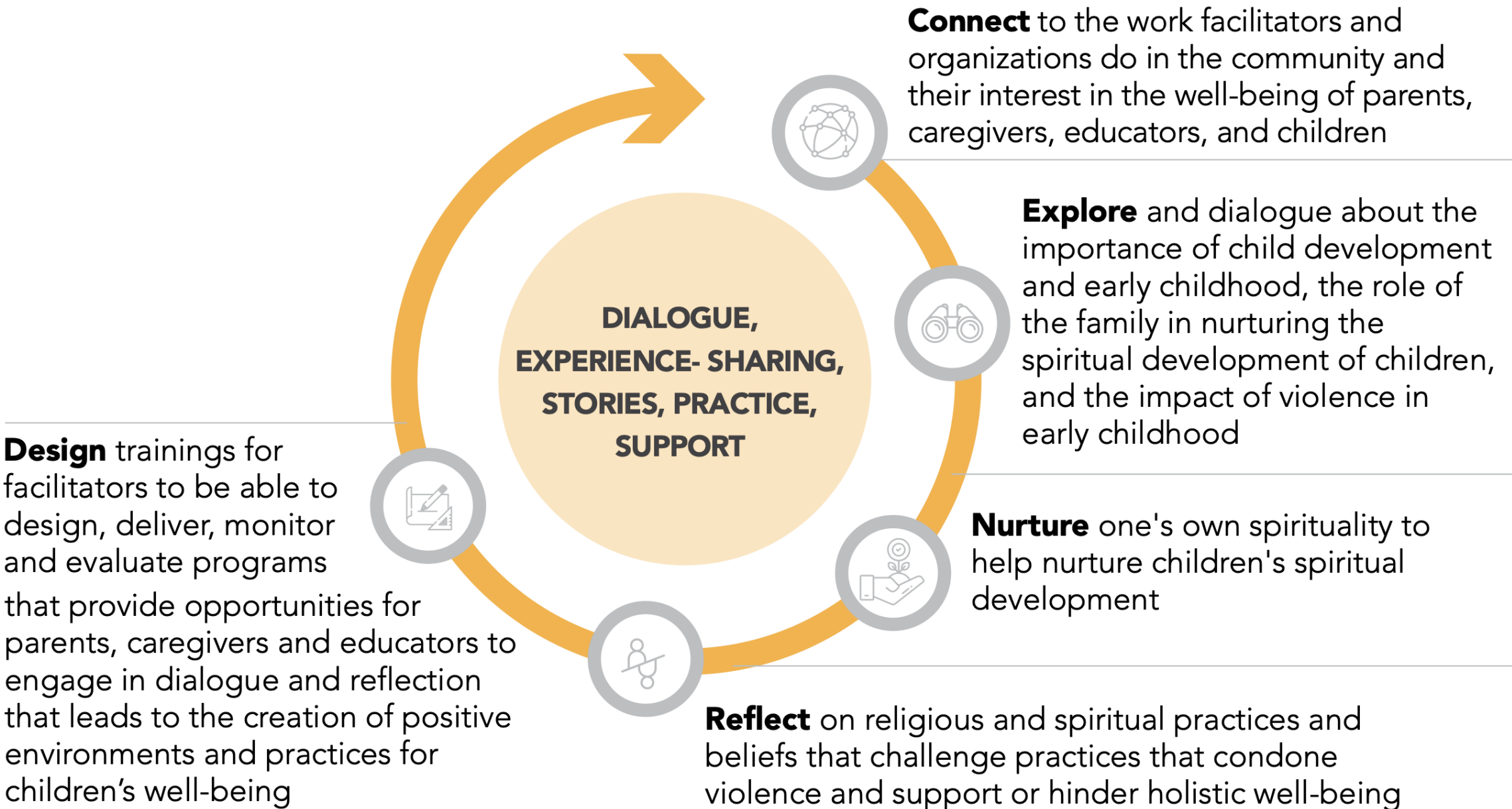


**SESSION 10:
ACTIVITIES FOR
CHILDREN**

Children's Innate Spiritual Capacities



**ADULT LEARNING
STYLES, APPROACH,
PROCESS AND
METHODOLOGIES**



Guided Simulation

- You are now a trainer on the Toolkit. You can train other adults on nurturing the spiritual development of children in the early years in your organisation or community.
- Facilitate an activity from Booklet II in groups of 3 from one of the modules for 30 minutes, you can use resources and choose the space you would like to use
- Internalise the content from the week on child rights, holistic development, spirituality, violence against children, and children's spiritual development

Guided Simulation

- 15 minutes for feedback after: Feedback from your team, the other participants and the trainer's team.
- How do we give constructive feedback?
- Sandwich method: Something good, something to improve, something good

DAY 5

Implementation Plans

- Using Booklet IV, you can identify the spaces/programs in your organisation where the Toolkit would add value and can be integrated
- Using the implementation form, think about next steps in using the knowledge you have acquired from this week and how/when/with whom you can conduct a facilitator training

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING