

MODULE 4 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

BARRIERS IN THE COMMUNITY

SENSITIZATION IN THE COMMUNITY

STRATEGIES FOR SENSITIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

FORMULATION OF MAHILA MANDAL

MODULE 4 WORKSHOP ON BARRIERS TO THE COMMUNITY

What are the barriers seen in the community?

- Attitudinal barriers
- Social barriers
- Physical barriers

What are the attitudinal barriers seen in parents of disabled and non-disabled children?

- Apprehension about putting their children into a new environment under a new teacher with new things to do.
- Anxiety about their child being accepted as well as being able to adjust to a new environment.
- Concerns among the parents of children with disability that their child will not be taken proper care of.
- Concerns among parents of non disabled children that if disabled children are included in anganwadis the teacher will not pay attention to the non-disabled children.

What can you do to help?

- As a community worker you can change such an attitude through organizing meeting with the parents to provide information on inclusive education.
- Convince them that an anganwadis worker is equipped to teach disabled children and non-disabled children together and that all children will benefit equally.
- Relate experiences to them based on your work in the Anganwadi.
- Inform them about the rights of the disabled child and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan policy.

What are the attitudinal barriers seen in the community?

- People from the community Label the children with disabilities with name like, 'Langada', Pagal,' etc.
- Lack of information on disability makes them isolate the child with disability.

- Education is of no value for a child with disability.

What can you do to help?

- Awareness programs should be conducted through rallies and focus groups on the attitudes to the disability.
- Street plays should be conducted.
- Resources from within the community should be utilized e.g. local leaders to help bring about attitudinal change.

What are the attitudinal barriers amongst teachers?

- Unwillingness to take responsibilities for the disabled child.
- Denying admission as they feel that a special school would be beneficial.

What can be done?

- Create awareness of the national policy of 'Education for All'.
- Organizing workshops for teachers to inform them on 'Different aspects of disability on Inclusive Education' and related topics.
- Introduce them to the aids and appliances, their availability and their use in the anganwadi.

What are the social barriers in the community?

Social problems that exist in the community.

- Poverty.
- Unemployment
- Drug abuse etc.

What can you do to help?

Organizing women from the community to set up the mahila mandal. Through the mahila mandal.

- Awareness programs on social problems can be arranged.
- Problems present at home and how to deal with them can be discussed.
- Small action groups to deal with specific problems can be identified.

What are the physical barriers in the community?

- No special furniture in the community school for the children with physical disability.
- Difficulty to reach their classrooms if they have to climb stairs.

What can be done?

- Parents can take responsibility of dropping the child to school.
- Support from peers.
- Parents could be involved in making specially designed furniture with inexpensive material available in the community.

MODULE 4

WORKSHOP ON SENSITIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

Who are the key people involved at the community level?

The key persons involved at the community level are as follows:

- Anganwadi community workers (teachers).
- Parents.
- Local leaders.
- Local school principals.
- Health officials, which includes Community Health Volunteers, Community Development Program Officials and Paraprofessionals.

Why is it important that the anganwadi community workers should be selected from the community in which the anganwadi is located?

Anganwadi community workers should be selected from the community as:

- They are familiar with the entire community.
- Parents are familiar with them, hence are ready to entrust their children to their care.

What role can the anganwadi community worker play?

- They can work to bring about an attitudinal change in the community by evaluating the attitudes and obstacles prevalent in the community toward inclusive education.
- They can be involved in designing and implementing various strategies for sensitization.
- They can work towards building a sense of responsibility and motivation in the community towards educating all children.

Why involve parents in promoting inclusive education in the community?

- Parents can help sensitized the neighbourhood.
- They can initiate responsibility amongst parents through parent-teacher meeting and formation of parent groups.
- They can thus help to break-down attitudinal barriers prevalent in the community.

Why involve the local leaders in promoting inclusive education in the community?

- Local leaders are the key influencers and decision makers in the community; they are play an important role in changing attitudes in the community.
- They could also help in finding space and setting up anganwadi to promote education.
- They could also help in tackling various obstacles in the community regarding admission in school, financial problems and management problems etc.

Why involve the local school principals in promoting inclusive education in the community?

- To make the admission process of children with disabilities in regular schools much easier.
- To help in assisting regular schoolteachers to handle children with disabilities in their classrooms by playing the role of resource professionals.
- To acquire their co-operation and assistance in evaluating the progress of children with disability, admitted in their school.

Why involve the health officials in promoting inclusive education in the community?

- Health officials are in constant contact with the community as the health posts are located within the community.
- As they are involved in maternal health and pregnancy, they can help spread awareness and stress the importance of early intervention.
- They can play an important role in sensitizing the community, about the benefits of inclusive education and can encourage parents to educate their child even if they have different ability levels.
- They could educate parents on the various cost effective aids and appliances available.
- They could also educate parents on various home management strategies that could be adopted to improve the development of the child.

MODULE 4
WORKSHOP ON STRATEGIES FOR SENSITIZATION

What are the various strategies that can be used to sensitize parents and the community?

- Focus Group.
- Parent-Teacher Meeting.
- Awareness rallies.
- Street plays.

Why these strategies used?

- To acquire opinions with regard to important issues and involve them in finding solutions to problems faced in the community.
- To provide information on social issues such as 'Education for All', the girl child, dowry, alcoholism, etc.
- To make the community aware of developments that could be beneficial to the community as a whole.
- To obtain their co-operation and support in projects that are developed in the community.

How do you develop a focus group?

- Determine the purpose behind the group meeting?
- Identifying an information-rich sample that would be responsive and respective. Sometimes you may have different samples for opinions on a single issue. For instance, should children with disability be included in regular school. The perspectives of parents of children with disability and of normal children would be required.
- Decide on how many meetings you would require in order to get adequate information and the size of the group. You should not have more than a dozen participants.
- Develop a written plan or a list of open-ended questions that would be asked to each group. You could take help from other teachers to develop these questions.
- The language used should be simple and understood by all.
- It is important to listen to the target audience carefully.
- Do not prompt the audience for responses.
- Record the responses for further analysis.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies.

Why is the parent-teacher meeting important?

- It provides the parents with information on their child's development.
- It makes parents aware of recent development and information beneficial to them and the community.
- It helps teachers evaluate the problems faced at home that could indirectly affect the child's development.
- It provides an opportunity to discuss the child's strengths and weakness as well as areas in which the parent's assistance is required.
- A home-management program could be provided to parents of children with disability.
- It also helps in reminding parents about their responsibilities and helps to provide encouragement to mothers who confront various problems.

What is required to start an awareness rally?

- An objective or cause towards which awareness needs to be created in the community.
- A group of 10-12 committed community workers, working towards a cause. They require being creative, confident and having loud voices to draw attention.
- A few slogans and short songs. These slogans should be short, rhyming, with a common message in all.
- Certain props such as banners with slogans, a drum or a steel thali and spoons to attract crowds.
- The group members should decide on the area they require to sensitize, and each 'gully' or street should be covered with the area.
- An appropriate time should be chosen when most of the community people are relatively free.
- A common language used and understood by most of the community people should be used to make the rally more effective and easy to relate to.

What is required to conduct a street play?

- A group of 10-12 committed community workers, working towards a cause. They required being creative, confident and having loud voices to draw attention.\
- A theme dealing with a social issue.
- A storyline or script is required that last for 7-10 minutes.
- The group needs to be familiar with the story line and the part they are to play.
- A few slogans and short songs that assists in disseminating information effectively to spread awareness on certain social issues. These slogans should be short, rhyming, with a common message in all.
- Certain props such as banners with slogans, a drum or a steel thali and spoons to attract crowds.
- A common colour code or dress code that all the group members are to wear in order to draw attention effectively.

How do they conduct a street play?

- A group member should decide on the area that requires sensitizing. A convenient spot, which is open, preferably near temple, a market or a school.
- A common language used and understood by most of the community people should be used.
- People's attention should be attracted by beating drums or a steel thali.
- This is followed by the group leader addressing the crowd by informing them about the purpose of the street play
- The group members move around in a circle by singing songs and slogans.
- The street play begins with each character coming to the centre of the circle introducing himself.
- Each group member moves around while acting.
- The group leader concludes the play by addressing the crowd with an encouraging message related to the theme of the play.
- Finally, the entire group ends the street play by singing songs and slogans.

MODULE 4
WORKSHOP ON FORMULATION OF MAHILA MANDAL

What is Mahila Mandal?

- A Mahila Mandal consists of women living within a community who are motivated to develop their community.

What is a Mahila Mandal supposed to do?

- Organize themselves into a group.
- Arrange meetings and discussions.
- Develop programs in the community.
- Develop income generation and saving strategies.

What are some issues that can be discussed at Mahila Mandal meetings?

- To evaluate the progress of the child attending the pre-school and factor related to it.
- To discuss issues related to their source of income, their education levels and their interest in training.
- To identify members who could be initiators and could actively participate in sustaining the group.

What is the role of the Mahila Mandal in various community development programs?

- Through various festivals and community events to create awareness on community issues such as child marriages, dowry, and health and hygiene.
- Issues such as an abortion and its harmful effects, contraceptives, the girl child, atrocities faced by women, and gender differences can be discussed.
- The importance of education should be propagated.
- Through these programs, adult literacy classes could be conducted. Families from the community should be approached to give their rooms on rent to conduct the classes.
- The Mahila Mandal could use slogans, street plays, puppet shows and demonstrations to spread awareness.

How do you form income generation groups?

- Firstly identify group members that are interested.
- Items that can be made by most members should be decided on, for e.g. diyas, candles, toran, hairclips etc.
- Training should be given to create these items/ products.
- Cost-effectiveness of the product is an important factor.
- Marketing strategies should be planned to sell these products.
- Information on the various saving banks accounts, postal services, daily banks and bank grants should be provided.
- Strategies on how to save finances, monthly or weekly, and information on how to gain access to a bank account should be provided.

What role can the Mahila Mandal play in creating awareness on disability?

- Women can be educated about the causes of disability and what sort of preventive measures may be taken.
- Problems faced in the home can be discussed and these discussions can be lead to a collective solution of the problem. This process not only brings about practical solutions but also provides immense support to each woman in the Mandal.
- Some of the problems that require a collective effort of all women in the community that can be achieved through the Mahila Mandal: The negative attitudes experienced by the disabled child and the mother; an alcoholic parent; child abuse and neglect; financial burden due to the child with disability; children with disability not being provided with the appropriate intervention and education. There are times when all these factors operate simultaneously.

The outcome of the Mahila Mandal

- The Mahila Mandal provides a common ground through which issues such as the girl child, children with disability, benefits of inclusive education and appropriate intervention for children within the low socio-economic strata may be discussed.
- The Mahila Mandal can also provide a platform through which women may voice their opinion on what is right for their children, whether this involves a girl child, a child with disability or children who are neglected.
- The Mahila Mandal provides a support system for women through which they can collectively work towards solving their problems and bring about changes in their family and community.