

Para Social Work II:

*Practice Skills to Intervene with
Most Vulnerable Children and Families
in Special Circumstances*

Day 3

- **Assessing Child and Family Needs**
- **Addressing Special Needs**
- **Family Resilience**

Objectives

At the end of this unit, Para Social Workers will be able to:

- Use an eco-map as a tool to facilitate effective assessments of vulnerable children and their families
- Identify needs and approaches to work with special needs groups, such as diverse cultural issues, women, gender, violence, health/mental issues, etc.
- Explain the concept of family resilience and how we, as Para Social Workers, strengthen families and help build resilience

Assessing Child and Family Needs

Assessment

Let's review from our previous training:

- What does assessment mean?
- How do we assess a child and/or a family's needs?
- Why is it important to involve the child and family closely in the assessment process?

The Eco-Map: An Assessment Tool for Para Social Workers

- The Eco-Map is a tool for Para Social Workers to gain a greater understanding of the child and his or her family
- The Eco-Map also shows the relationship between the family and the resources of the extended family and the community
- The Eco-Map is a tool to get more information related to the Eco-Framework we used in the Introduction to Para Social Work course (PSW I)

Source: Hartman, Ann. (1995). Diagrammatic assessment of family relationships. Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 76(2) pp. 111-122.

The Eco-Framework

Four Areas of Information to Explore:

A. Information about the child

B. Information about the family

C. Information about extended family and friends

D. Information about the community

Child Level

The Eco-Map

A useful tool for working with children and families to assess needs

- To be completed with the child and family
- Useful in assessment, planning, and intervention
- Portrays a point-in-time overview of the family in their life situation
- Demonstrates positive connections and sources of conflict
- Demonstrates flow of resources or lacks and deprivation of resources
- Highlights issues to address and resources to be mobilized

Basic Principles of Eco-Mapping

- **The Family:** all of the people connected in one household; the family portion of the eco-map should include the age and the status of its members, living or dead
- **The Social Ecology:** all of the external forces/factors in the community affecting one or more person in the family; the social ecology factors may vary by size and placement to indicate their importance

Basic Principles of Eco-Mapping

- **The Connectors:** The connections between child, family, extended family, and community organizations are shown by lines. The connections can be strong or weak; they can flow in or out, or in both directions.
- Like all complicated maps, the Eco-Map changes over time and should be re-charted every time a significant event occurs in the family.

Instructions for Completing Eco-Map

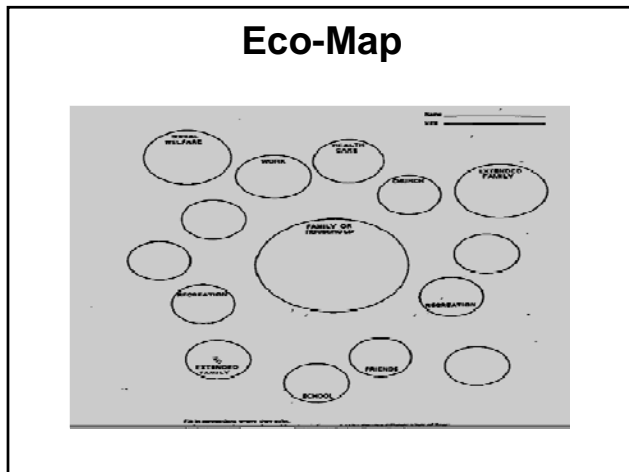
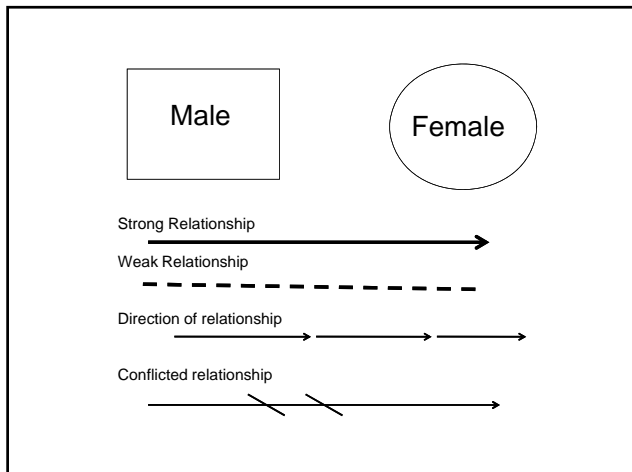
- Draw the household in a large circle at map's center
 - Use squares to depict males, circles to depict females
 - include ages and dates of life events if known
- Draw a straight line between husband and wife to indicate marriage
 - Draw a slash across line to indicate divorce
 - Draw a line down from the from the parents to indicate children
 - Draw line up from the parent to indicate grandparents
 - Draw a square or circle near the bottom of the household circle to indicate household members who are not related to the family
 - Draw an X across a square or circle to indicate death of the person

Instructions for Completing Eco-Map

- Next, add connections between family, or individual family members, and the larger environment by drawing lines between the family and the circle with the particular system label

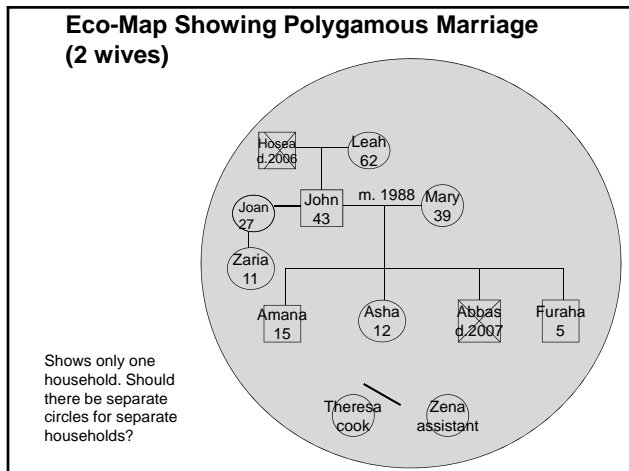
Instructions for Completing Eco-Map

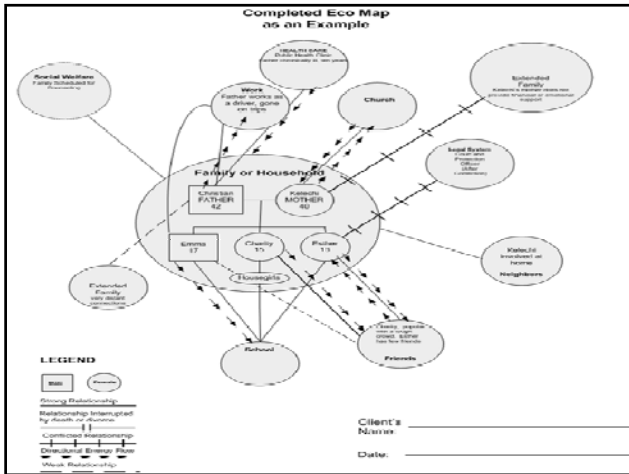
- The type of line indicates the nature of the connection
 - Solid or thick line indicates a strong connection
 - Dotted line indicates a weak connection
 - Slash marks across a line indicate a stressful or conflicted relationship
 - Arrows along the connecting lines indicate the flow of energy, resources or interest OR
 - Ask families nature of relationship and write brief description along connecting lines



Instructions for Completing Eco-Map

- Next, add connections between family, or individual family members, and the larger environment by drawing lines between the family and the circle with the particular system label





Discussion

- How would you use this tool?
- How might it fit the Assessment Form (Child Status Index) and Service Plan?
- Other thoughts?

Small Group Exercise: Completing an Eco-Map

- Get into small groups
- Using an example from one group member's experience, role play a Para Social Worker interviewing a family to assess a child's needs
- Complete the Eco-Map form based on your assessment

Small Group Exercise: Completing an Eco-Map

- Report Backs
- What did we learn?

Completing the Eco-Map

- Suggestion: Complete an eco-map on your own family situation and pay attention to any feelings that come up, as well as weaknesses in relationships with others.
- There may be new information or gaps in information. We can discuss with the group during the plenary.

Special Needs Related to Diverse Cultural Family Situations

What are some of the different family cultural situations that you encounter?

- Brainstorm

Special Needs Related to Diverse Cultural Family Situations

- What are some of the different family situations that you encounter?
 - Polygamous families
 - Different cultural aspects
 - Pastoral or mobile families
 - Others?
- What are some strategies to address their needs?

Special Needs Related to Diverse Cultural Family Situations

Para Social Workers need to:

- Obtain knowledge about the family’s culture (diversity competence)
- Develop cultural competence skills, such as for building a multicultural counseling relationship and working within the family’s cultural system

Special Needs Related to Diverse Cultural Family Situations

Para Social Workers need to:

- Adopt an open-minded questioning approach, laying aside pre-conceived notions about client cultures
- Listen to the experiences of the client

Case Examples

- Salama is a 13 year old girl who works as a sex worker. She has some hearing loss and reports some of her clients have been violent with her.
- Zena is a 36-year-old woman who has been blind all her life. She has three children, including a son age 12 years who went to school when he was younger but now is selling water, eggs, and other things on the street to support the family. She has a daughter, age 7 years, who is refusing to go to school, and another son, age 1 year, who needs a lot of care.
- Adam is a boy among 12 children in the polygamous family of Mr. Mwakipesile. He feels like he is not cared for, the father is favoring the same age children of a young wife. Adam is becoming violent and fighting with the other children.
- Happiness is a 27-year-old woman with one child age 4. Happiness became pregnant and tested positive for HIV. Her husband has left her after condemning her for having brought HIV into the family. She is upset and sad and reluctant to take antiretroviral drugs.

What are their special needs?

- Salama
- Zena and her children
- Adam
- Happiness

Addressing Special Needs

- Address the whole person
- Cultural issues may be compounded by other problems
- Need to help the person understand that multiple problems may go together, and that each one should be addressed as needed
- Clients may need to be linked with others who have the same mix of problems

Issues Related to Women

- Full participation of women involved in decision making on personal issues as well as policy related issues
- Many women place their children's needs before their own needs
- Issues of female control in safer sex and preventing HIV transmission
- Others???

Para Social Worker Roles:

Encouraging woman to be involved; addressing inequities; assisting in planning and problem solving

Issues Related to Relationships

- Mutual respect for one's entitlements
- Supportive relationships based on trust
- Mutual support
- Shared benefits
- Negotiations and communications
- Shared ownership of problems and being part of the solution

Para Social Worker Roles:

listening; problem identification; helping the couple make a plan; referrals to counseling as needed

Issues Related to Multiple Health Problems

- Getting a comprehensive diagnosis including, screening for HIV and other health problems
- Accessing and working with other service providers
- Are there cultural and economic factors that affect how illnesses are addressed?

Para Social Worker Roles:

Provide information; problem solving; advocating; mediating with healthcare provider

Issues Related to Violence

- Understand how socially constructed gender identities lead to violence against women
- Include women and men equally in decision-making and peaceful co-existence
- Violence has a continued impact across the family system.
- Access to culturally sensitive resources to address violence issues

Para Social Worker Roles:

Educate self and clients; problem solving; referral to responsive resources; follow-up and advocacy.

Issues Related to Gender, Sexuality & HIV

- Women require men's cooperation to protect themselves
- Where condom is the main protection, women rely on male partners to be faithful
- Men's behavior puts women at risk for HIV
- Empowerment should address underlying social structures, institutions, and relationships on which inequality is based

Para Social Worker Roles:

Empowerment of women; addressing social and cultural issues; help involve both partners in decision making; problem solving or role play to empower women

Issues Related to Use of Other Drugs

- Alcohol, marijuana, and "hard drugs" may be a factor in HIV transmission, adherence, and quality of life for People Living With HIV
- Alcohol and other drugs may affect judgment and risk behavior
- Drug treatment programs and support groups are beginning to be available in Tanzania
- Use of these drugs may affect blood pressure, nutrition, and other health problems

Para Social Worker Roles:

Educate children and family about impact of these drugs; help client consider making changes in using drugs; refer client to other service providers for treatment and/or support groups

Building Family Resilience

Reference: Child Welfare Information Gateway, U.S. Dept. Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "Strengthening Families and Communities: 2011 Resource Guide" downloaded July 1, 2011
www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/

Resilience

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**Children First
Protecting Children
Strengthening Families**

Topic Outline

- What is resilience?
- Five Evidence-based resilience factors in working with families
- How we apply this as Para Social Workers

What is Resilience?

What are protective factors for children and families that allow them to recover from complex problem situations?

Brainstorm

What is Resilience?

- Resilience/protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and wellbeing of children and families
- These factors or conditions improve the family's ability to bounce back from stressful situations. They are like shock absorbers (buffers), they reduce the effects of the problem or stressor and help children and family members to find supports or coping strategies that allow them to function effectively, even under stress. These factors help parents and other caregivers to parent effectively.

Five Evidence-based Resilience Factors

Research has shown that the following resilience and/or protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents

Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway, USHHS, ACF, July 1, 2011.
<http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/>

Nurturing and Attachment

- As we discussed in the Introduction to Para Social Work (PSW I), a child's early experience of being nurtured and developing a bond with a caring adult affects all aspects of behavior and development. When parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive, including love, acceptance, positive guidance, and protection.
- Research shows that babies who receive affection and nurturing from their parents have the best chance of healthy development. A child's relationship with a consistent, caring adult in the early years is associated later in life with better academic grades, healthier behaviors, more positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress.

Nurturing and Attachment

- Therefore enough **nurturing and attachment** serves as a protective factor to help the family achieve resilience, or the ability to bounce back from stressful situations.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child and Youth Development

- There is extensive research linking healthy child development to effective parenting. Children thrive when parents provide not only affection, but also use other effective parenting principles, including respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child and Youth Development

- Successful parenting fosters psychological adjustment, helps children succeed in school, encourages curiosity about the world, and motivates children to achieve.
- Therefore **knowledge and use of effective parenting techniques** serves as a protective factor to help the family achieve resilience, or the ability to bounce back from stressful situations.

Parental Resilience

- Parents or other caregivers who can cope with the stresses of everyday life, as well as an occasional crisis, have resilience themselves; they have the flexibility and inner strength necessary to bounce back when things are not going well.
- Multiple life stressors, such as a family history of abuse or neglect, health problems, marital conflict, or domestic or community violence — and financial stressors such as unemployment, poverty, and homelessness — may reduce a parent's capacity to cope effectively with the typical day-to-day stresses of raising children.

Parental Resilience

- Therefore assistance in **strengthening the parent or caregiver's ability to cope with stressful situations** serves as a protective factor to help the family achieve resilience, or the ability to bounce back from stressful situations.

Social Connections

- Parents or other caregivers with a social network of emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors often find that it is easier to care for their children and themselves. Most parents need people they can call on once in a while when they need a sympathetic listener, advice, or concrete support.
- Research has shown that parents who are isolated, with few social connections, are at higher risk for child abuse and neglect.

Social Connections

- Therefore assistance in **strengthening the parent or caregiver’s social support network** serves as a protective factor to help the family achieve resilience.

Concrete Supports for Parents & Other Caregivers

- Many factors affect a family’s ability to care for their children. Families who can meet their own basic needs for food, clothing, housing, and transportation — and who know how to access essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services to address family-specific needs — are better able to ensure the safety and well-being of their children.
- Partnering with parents to identify and access resources in the community may help prevent the stress that sometimes precipitates child maltreatment. Providing concrete supports may also help prevent the unintended neglect that sometimes occurs when parents are unable to provide for their children.

Concrete Supports for Parents & Other Caregivers

- Research has shown that insuring that families have **their basic needs met** serves as a protective factor to help the family achieve resilience.

What are Ways for Para Social Workers to Enhance Resilience/Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families?

Brainstorm

How Para Social Workers Enhance Resilience and Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families

Research has found that the following are effective strategies that family support and child abuse prevention programs can use to promote these protective factors:

How Para Social Workers Enhance Resilience and Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families

- **Facilitate friendships and mutual support:** offer opportunities for parents and other caregivers in the neighborhood to get to know each other, develop mutual support systems, and take leadership roles. Strategies may include social activities, sharing meals, classes, organizing resources or networks to facilitate mutual supports among families in need. Family members may involved in leadership of these activities as well as other volunteer opportunities.

How Para Social Workers Enhance Resilience and Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families

- **Strengthen parenting:** Develop ways for parents and other caregivers to get support on parenting issues when they need it. Possibilities include classes, support groups, home visits, and written information materials.
- **Respond to family crises:** Offer extra support to families at times of crisis or other difficulties. For example when a family member is ill, times of famine or poor crops, loss of housing and other problems.

How Para Social Workers Enhance Resilience and Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families

- **Link families to services and opportunities:** Provide referrals for to develop new skills, education, health care, counseling, and other assistance from local service providers.
- **Value and support parents and other caregivers:** The relationship between families and service provider staff is essential. Providing psychosocial support appreciating the caregiver's willingness to support these children helps the family to respond to difficult situations.

How Para Social Workers Enhance Resilience and Protective Factors for Vulnerable Children and their Families

- **Facilitate children's social and emotional development:** Para Social Workers can provide psycho-social support or can identify others who can provide children counseling or group support to enhance their social and emotional development. When children bring home what they learn, parents benefit as well.
- **Observe and respond to early warning signs of child abuse or neglect:**
Para Social Workers should observe the children they serve carefully and respond at the first sign of difficulty. Early intervention can help ensure children are safe and parents get the support and services they need. Para Social Workers can also educate the caregivers to watch for signs of abuse and neglect from other adults.

Summary and Debriefing for the Day

Final Plenary and Pashas