

Helping Children Become Resilient

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A "Pathways to Resilience" Workshop

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Note: This workshop is based on "Seven Pathways to Resilience in Children Affected by Adversity," a brief summary of research findings. That article appeared in the *Chris-Caba Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 3. Please e-mail Dr. Dick Stellway at rjslink@mindspring.com for information.

Introduction: This workshop is designed to help groups develop an action plan to assist orphans and vulnerable children handle the challenges before them by building their resilience and coping capacity. Every person can help a child.

Preparing for the workshop -

Here are some items that will help you prepare for the half-day workshop.

- ✓ Make sure that all workshop participants have a copy of the *Seven Pathways to Resilience* article and ask them to read it before the workshop.
- ✓ Organize prayer support for the workshop. (It would be good to have people agree to pray during the workshop session.)
- ✓ Make sure the necessary materials are available*
- ✓ Arrange for a person to lead the group in a 15 minute devotional with a focus on the needs of the children and the purpose of the workshop
- ✓ Line up a person to give an opening prayer for God's presence and presence and for God to use this workshop to inspire workers
- ✓ Prepare copies of directions for three Pathway Group directors (noted below)
- ✓ Review the guidelines for both the Workshop Leader and the Pathway Group Leader

*Suggested Materials:

- ✓ small stickers or 3 x 3 cm squares of paper
- ✓ paper for note taking
- ✓ large paper for posting group recommendations
- ✓ pens for note taking and markers for posting recommendations
- ✓ tape for taping colored paper and for posting recommendations
- ✓ copies of this article for workshop participants

Guidelines for the Workshop Facilitator

1st Session (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours)

1. Open the meeting in an appropriate way to the culture. This might include a song, a short devotional message or Bible passage, a prayer.
2. Welcome the participants
3. State the purpose and importance of the workshop
4. Make sure each person has a copy of the article.
5. Review what resilience involves and why it is important in the lives of children affected by HIV and AIDS. You might invite people to comment on how we can recognize resilience in children.
6. Examine the seven pathways to resilience by asking the group to answer the following questions:
 - A. Pathway #1 involves group participation.
 - 1) What kind of groups can best help children become or remain resilient? How?
 - B. Pathway #2: Inspiration derived from "significant others"
 - 1) What makes a person significant in the eyes of a child?
 - 2) What kinds of people can be significant others?
 - C. Pathway #3 focuses on advocacy.
 - 1) What is advocacy?
 - 2) What kind of advocacy can help children affected by AIDS become resilient?
 - D. Pathway #4 involves children helping other children.
 - 1) How does this promote resilience?
 - 2) How can children be encouraged to help one another?
 - E. Pathway #5 consists of recreational "time out"
 - 1) What is meant by "time out"?
 - 2) How can children take "time out"?
 - F. Pathway #6 points out the importance of dreams.
 - 1) What kind of dreams are involved?
 - 2) Why are they important?
 - 3) Why are these dreams fragile and easily damaged?
 - 4) How can children balance their dreams with reality?
 - G. Pathway #7 says that faith and trust in God promotes resilience.
 - 1) What kind of faith or trust can help children become resilient?

- 2) What Bible passages promote faith and trust in God?
- 3) How can prayer contribute to resilience?
- 4) Are there other ways in which faith can help children to be resilient?

7. Ask the group to consider how building resilience in children can help future generations.

End of 1st Session

Short break (Suggest 15-20 minutes for tea or other culturally appropriate refreshment)

2nd Session (1 ½ hours; allow 1st 15 minutes for voting)

8. Write each of the seven pathways on a black board or post them on paper in large print so that the group members can see them.
9. Give people a few minutes to ask any questions what will help them clarify any pathways they don't understand.
10. Give each person three pieces of small (4 x 4 cm.) paper (or stickers) that they can use for voting.
11. Explain to people that each of these pieces of paper represents one vote.
12. Ask people to place their small square papers or stickers (votes) on the board next to the pathways they are most interested in working on.

Explain that people can put two or three of their squares or stickers (votes) next to one pathway if they wish.
13. After everyone has posted their votes, have the group determine the three pathways with the most votes.
14. Explain that "pathway groups" will now be formed to develop each of these three pathways. Note: Two pathways may be selected if the workshop has less than 8 participants.
15. Designate areas in the room where people can gather with others who are interested in working on the same pathway.

Example: If Pathway #2 is one of the three top vote getters, ask people who are interested in working on Pathway #2 to gather in the back of the room.

Suggestion: After people have gathered into groups, some may be larger than others. Ask if anyone would be willing to shift from a large group to a smaller group.
16. After the different Pathway Groups have gathered together, ask each Pathway Group to designate a person to serve as Pathway Group Director.
17. Give this person in each group a written description of the steps below.

Directions for Pathway Working Group Directors - 1st Pathway Working Group session

- 1) Make sure that the group members know one another
- 2) Request that someone pray for *God's* guidance and insight in this activity and for an outcome that will help children prepare to deal with the difficulties they are facing.
- 3) Ask the group to decide on a person to record and report on the group discussion.
- 4) Take 6 or 7 minutes to brainstorm possible ways to help children along the pathway the group is focusing on.
- 5) Have the recorder write down all of the ideas.
- 6) After **each person** has had a chance to share, ask the recorder to read the ideas that group members have come up with.
- 7) Invite people to comment on the ideas and add to them.
Note: Give time for the recorder to record any changes or additions to each of the ideas presented. (Members of the group can help the recorder in this effort.)
- 8) By a vote or by other means ask the group members to decide on one to three ideas they will recommend for building resilience along the pathway of focus.
- 9) Write these on a large sheet of paper and tape this paper to the wall.

End of Session #2

Break Time - Workshop Facilitator: This will give other groups time to finish up so that all can return to the meeting room in time for the next session.

Session # 3 (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours - During first $\frac{1}{2}$ hour ask Pathway Working Groups to review their plans with all workshop participants and obtain feedback.

Workshop Facilitator-

18. After the break, have all Pathway Working Groups come together to review their recommendations. (This should take between 25 and 40 minutes.)

19. Invite a spokes person from each group to share the key ideas that the group came up with to promote resilience along their pathway of focus.

20. After each group has shared, invite people to raise questions or make suggestions.

21. Have people rejoin their "pathway group"

Directions for Pathway Working Group Directors - 2nd Pathway Working Group session (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours)

- 10) Ask the group to review any suggestions that came out of the previous discussion session.
- 11) Ask the group to decide on which idea the "pathway group" will work on to help children develop resilience
- 12) Ask the group to outline the steps necessary to develop and implement this plan.
- 13) Have the recorder write down the steps so that the group can see them and review them.
- 14) After the steps have been established, ask the group to develop a time line for moving through the steps.
- 15) Now ask the group to decide which people are going to be responsible for accomplishing each step.
- 16) Agree on a person to which the group will report their progress in accomplishing each step.
- 17) Decide on a time when the group will meet next.
- 18) Copy the Pathway Working Group's "Plan of Action" on a large paper for posting in the front of the room for the final session.
- 19) Before you dismiss your working group for a break, check with the Workshop Facilitator on the time the final session will begin.

Break Time (approx. 20 minutes)

Session 4 (final session -30-40 minutes)

Workshop Facilitator

22. Let the Pathway Working Group Directors know when the final session will begin so they can announce it before their groups go for the final break time.
Note: You will need to allow enough break time to allow all groups to finish their "Plan of Action".
23. Help each group post their "Plan of Action" where all workshop participants can view it.
24. After posting the plans, invite the group to pray for one another and for God's direction and provision as they put their plans into action.
25. Thank the members for their participation.
26. Invite people to fill out a [Pathways to Resilience Workshop Evaluation Form](#)
27. Close the meeting in a culturally appropriate way. For example, you might invite people to pray that the Action Plans of each of the Pathway Working Groups will be put into action, that people will remember their assignments and work well together, that the children will feel supported and become more resilient, etc.
28. Before dismissing the group, make sure that you have a copy of each group's "Action Plan."

Note to Workshop Facilitators:

We value your feedback on this workshop. Please let us know how it went and what advice you might have for future workshops. You may send your feedback to AIDS@viva.org, subject: Pathways Workshop Evaluation.

-- Thank You!

Pathways to Resilience Workshop Evaluation Form

Dear Workshop Participant,

We value your feedback on the workshop. Please take a few minutes to respond to the questions below.

1. How did you learn about the workshop?
2. Did the workshop help clarify the pathways to resilience?

a) ___yes; b) ___no; c) ___unsure

3. Did the workshop allow enough time for each activity?

a) ___yes; b) ___no.

4. If you answered no, please indicate where more time is needed.

5. Did your Pathway Working Group develop a Plan of Action for helping children become resilient?

a) ___yes; b) ___no

6. If you answered yes to Question 3, how satisfied are you with your Working Group's Plan of Action

a) ___very satisfied; b) ___somewhat satisfied; c) ___not very satisfied.

7. Please explain your response to Question #4

8. If you answered yes to question 3, how confident are you that your group will be able to carry out the group's Plan of Action?

a) ___very confident; b) ___somewhat confident c) ___not confident

9. Please explain your response to Question 6

10. Please include any suggestions you have for improving the workshop

Thank you for your feedback. Please give this form to your Workshop Facilitator.