

Ending Violence Against Children by Supporting Parents

Recommendations and Background From GISP

Background

The first-ever Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children (VAC) in November 2024 offers a critical moment to secure concrete commitments and sustainable investments to end violence against children. Given children's reliance on others for their well-being and development, providing skills to parents and caregivers is **our greatest opportunity to protect children from violence. Parenting support has therefore been identified as one of the Conference's three "breakthrough areas."** This document is intended to provide states with an overview on what parenting support is, how it works, and the impact it has on ending violence against children of all ages.



What is Parenting Support?

Parenting support is a broad set of services, programs, activities, resources, and information available to parents to help them in their parenting role, increasing child-rearing knowledge, skills, and social support, enhancing parenting competencies, and promoting the well-being of parents and children.

By offering parents and caregivers support directly through programs, service delivery, and an enabling environment, parenting behaviors can be strengthened. This can help to reduce violence against both children and women, and accelerate change that supports positive family, gender, and social outcomes.

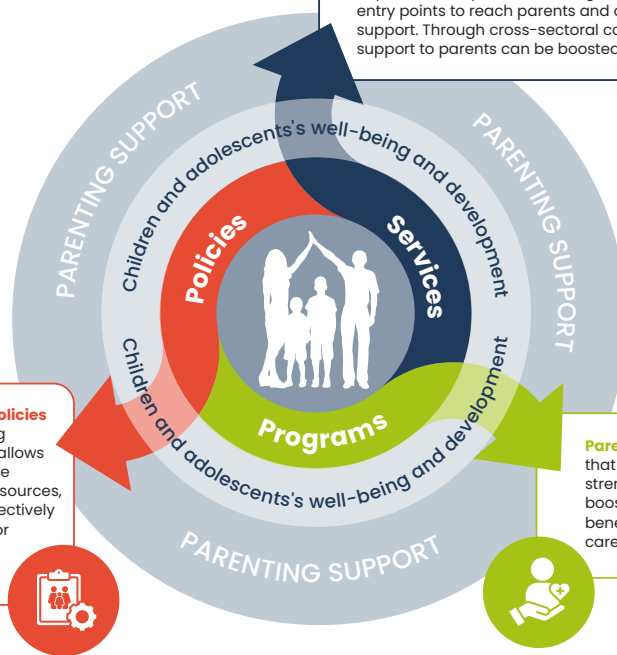
Family-friendly policies create an enabling environment that allows parents to have the necessary time, resources, and support to effectively parent and care for children and adolescents.



Quality services that recognize and respond to parents' unique and evolving needs provide entry points to reach parents and offer support. Through cross-sectoral coordination, support to parents can be boosted.



Parenting programs that build on parents' strengths can bolster and boost parenting behaviors, benefiting parents, caregiver, and children.



The Impact of Parenting Support— Preventing VAC

Globally, **75% of children aged 2 to 4 experience violent discipline from their caregivers regularly; yet the majority of parents and caregivers are "not malevolent but lack the capacity to find alternatives to violent punishment."** Parents and caregivers are actually a critical entry point to prevent VAC and parenting programs have been shown to reduce both violence against children and violence against women. This is critical for the achievement of both SDG 5.2 (eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls) and SDG 16.2 (end abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children). Programs that tackle this co-occurrence of violence against children and violence against women have shown incredible results—even in humanitarian settings.

Investing in parenting support has a ripple effect to advance towards the SDGs

Investing in parent and caregiver support should be considered a "Best Buy" for countries and donors looking to make headway across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **Through parenting support, children and parents and caregivers benefit.** If implemented at scale, parenting support can contribute to societal-level outcomes across a number of SDGs with increased human capital and reduced inequities.



Key Messages for Ministerial Participants



Parents and caregivers need support within an enabling environment.

Family-friendly policies can complement interventions and service delivery to ensure the care, time, resources, and services for parents and caregivers to provide quality childcare (such as parental leave in line with WHO standards) and to engage in play activities with their children. Governments should leverage existing policies and systems to bolster support to parents and caregivers.



Parenting support is a critical tool to prevent both violence against children and against women.

There is robust evidence that parenting support interventions reduce risks of violence against children and violence against women.



Parenting support can also improve child development outcomes and boost parent and caregiver health, well-being, and productivity.

Investing in parenting support can lead to positive family, gender, and social outcomes, ultimately transforming society within our lifetime.

Concrete Steps that Governments can Take to Advance Parenting Support

Despite evidence of multiple positive outcomes of parenting support interventions and the fact that parenting is one of the seven “INSPIRE” evidence-based strategies for ending VAC, only 26% of governments worldwide report that parenting support programs reach all parents in need.

Universal parenting support offers the potential to deliver a brighter future for children and caregivers.

The Global Initiative to Support Parents (GISP) urges governments to create or revise and implement national laws, policies, and systems to promote caregiving environments that holistically address the unique needs of both children and caregivers across all settings, including in humanitarian crises.

To achieve universal parenting support, governments should commit to:



Delivering an evidence-based, gender-transformative parenting support program to the highest-risk 50% of the population and media-based parenting support to the other 50%.



Ensuring programs address attitudes, knowledge, and skills to promote nurturing care and gender-equitable relationships in the family.



Integrating parenting support into routine services to expand access to all parents and caregivers and to identify and refer those with unique needs.



Strengthening parenting support by investing in quality services and an enabling environment through family-friendly policies.

GISP encourages governments and other ministerial participants to keep up the momentum for parents by championing the cause of parenting support by attending the upcoming Global Caregiver Forum in 2025 and seeking further opportunities to ensure parenting and caregiver support are part of normative frameworks that support the achievement of development goals, human rights agendas, and humanitarian aid needs.

About the Global Initiative to Support Parents

GISP is a global platform dedicated to catalyzing parent and caregiver support across sectors, the life course, and the world. GISP works with governments, researchers, civil society partners, funders, and caregivers to achieve its vision of enabling all parents and caregivers to access quality, evidence-based parenting support according to their needs by 2027.

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