



# SKILFUL PARENTING

## FACT SHEET



*Investing in Children and their Societies (ICS-SP) strives towards a better future for children in rural Africa. Together with families, communities, and other stakeholders we initiate programmes to create safe and nurturing environments for children to reach their full potential. At the very core of our work is Skilful Parenting and Ending Violence against Children.*

### Our Goal

Is to ensure that all parents and caregivers are critical, aware and positive about their parenting role to effectively meet their children’s developmental, growth, and safety needs.

### Our strategy: Skilful Parenting

With the confidence that all parents want the best for their children, ICS-SP believes that parents need to feel the ‘Power to Parent’ so as to positively influence the future of their children. To enable them to become better parents and caregivers, ICS-SP Skilful Parenting approach reinforces positive parenting practices, empowering parents and caregivers to address the challenges they face in bringing up their children. By increasing parents’ capacities in child development, communication skills and age-appropriate parenting, family relationships are strengthened, parents’ self-esteem built, parental stress levels reduced, and child wellbeing enhanced. The program also contributes to the prevention of violence against children, women and girls. Because poverty remains a stressor in the parenting process, ICS-SP combines skilful parenting with economic interventions to improve household income and food security.

### Our Model

At ICS-SP, We believe that change will only take place if parents are convinced of the need for change and of their capacity to change. The skilful parenting program is built upon evidence-based understanding that changes in parenting can only be achieved through planned behaviour change. ICS-SP

applies the term behavior change not only towards behavior that needs to change but also to sustainable behaviour that contributes to promotion of skilful parenting. The behaviour change model regarding skilful parenting is adapted from the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The components of the behavior change model are addressed through several modules. (Figure 1). ICS-SP invests in providing knowledge, addressing the risks of not providing adequate care and protection to children and in strengthening the belief of parents that they can take action towards change (self-efficacy). ICS-SP collaborates with national, regional and international organizations in the development of the parenting modules. The skilful parenting program serves as a basis for ECD, nutrition, maternal, newborn, child health and birth registration interventions targeting parents and children.

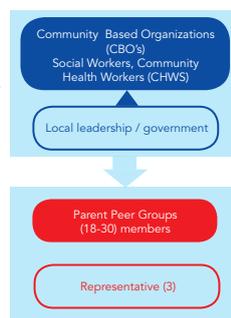
### Our Investment Choices:

**Development and implementation of culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive skilful parenting modules, tool kits and information sheets:** Parenting and childhood are strongly influenced by culture, history and other contextual factors. Our skilful parenting model does not preach the best way of parenting. It does not want to tell parents “this is how you have to do it” rather, it helps parents in their task of raising children in a pluralistic and changing society by providing them with the knowledge and skills to choose what works best for them and their family in their various contexts.

### Mobilizing and organizing parent peer groups for training and ongoing support:

Under the guidance of professional facilitators, skilful parenting is provided to parent peer groups consisting of fathers, mothers and other caregivers. The facilitators address basic parenting topics (figure1) in different sessions geared towards providing parents with basic knowledge and opportunities for social comparison and joint reflection. The exact number and content of the sessions is tailored to the characteristic needs and interest of each specific group of parents. Special fatherhood sessions are organised for fathers.

### Basic Skilful Parenting Modules

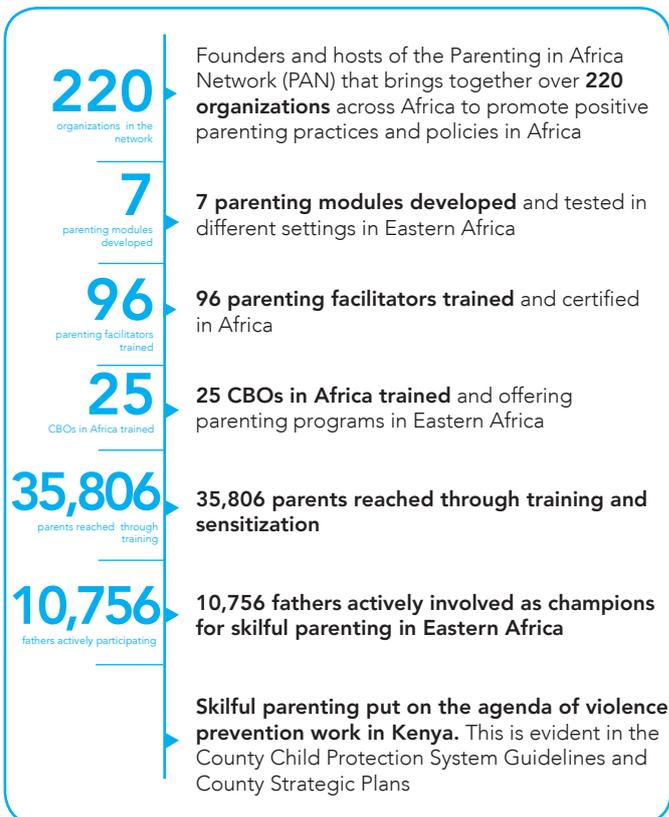


**Organizing awareness raising campaigns to promote a culture of skilful parenting:** ICS-SP believes in the power of combining different interventions that address the complex interplay between individuals, community, and societal factors. The work with parent peer groups is combined with wider community awareness-raising campaigns on different topics on parenting and individual family follow-ups.

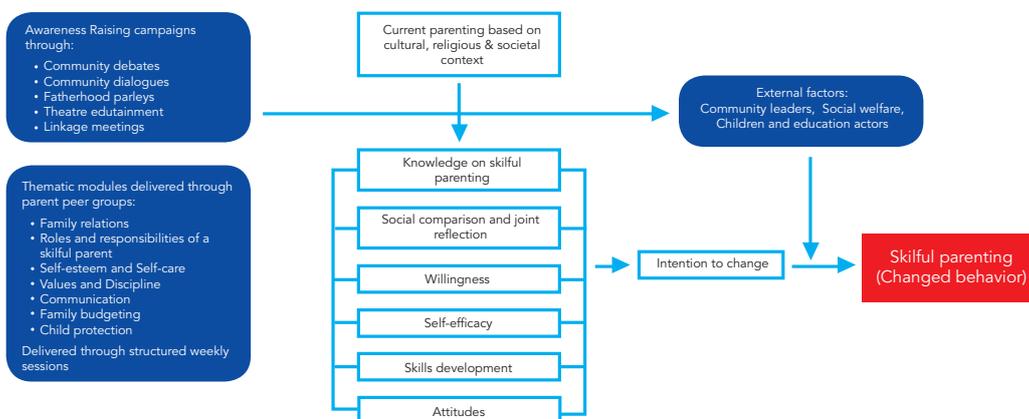
**Strengthening the capacity of local CBOs and NGOs to implement the skilful parenting:** To be able to reach out to a community on a larger scale, ICS-SP has realized that working through Community Based Organizations (CBOs) has the most impact. CBOs often have a longer standing presence in a community and therefore are able to provide long term support, creating sustainable change. ICS-SP mobilizes and trains CBOs to deliver the program in their communities. ICS-SP and partners also work with ECD centres, Adult Literacy Programs, Social workers/Community Health Workers and Youth Clubs as entry points.

**Building the capacity of frontline and specialised workers and linking these workers to parent groups:** Work with families promotes the demand and utilization of basic services. These include: Social Welfare, Children, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, ECD, Education, Nutrition and Psychosocial Service. Providers need therefore to have the right attitude, knowledge and skills to provide ongoing support and specialised services to families and caregivers in need. ICS-SP invests in building their capacity to offer quality ongoing support to communities and families.

## Our Successes



## How our Skilful Parenting approach works



**Collaborative lobbying and advocacy:** Families remain the pillar of development in Africa. Putting parenting on the agenda of violence prevention, ECD, Health, Nutrition, Education and Economic programs remains integral in the work of ICS-SP. ICS-SP organizes learning, sharing and lobbying platforms on parenting at national and regional level to strengthen lobbying efforts. In addition, ICS-SP conducts research in collaboration with knowledge institutes to generate evidence that can be framed for deliberation in policy making processes at local, national and regional levels. ICS-SP adopts a cooperative and collaborative approach to lobbying decision and policymakers.

**Identification and training of parenting facilitators:** A crucial factor in the success of the program is the quality of facilitation. ICS-SP provides training to parenting facilitators throughout Africa to effectively deliver the skilful parenting program in their communities. Organizations that are interested in integrating skilful parenting in their programs can contact ICS-SP about this training service.

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