



# THE PARENTING CHALLENGE

## WHY AND HOW

*Parents (or caregivers) are the most essential key players in improving the wellbeing of children . In our project areas, parents face many challenges. That's why Help a Child introduced The Parenting Challenge, a method to improve the knowledge, attitude and skills of parents.*

### THE PARENTING CHALLENGE

The goal of the Parenting Challenge is to improve the parenting skills of mothers, fathers and other caretakers, so that they can provide adequate and relevant support to their children. It is a group-based method, whereby the parents are actively involved in discussions and group-work and are sharing their thoughts and ideas. The role of the facilitator is more to lead the discussion, instead of teaching.

### KEY STRENGTHS

The Parenting Challenge is involving **mothers and fathers**, which makes the sessions more effective. The **group-based approach** helps parents to strengthen their social network. Besides this the method is **participatory**, which promotes internalization , while the **bottom-up structure** increases the sustainability of the effects of this method.



### AVAILABLE MODULES

The basics (module 1-4, including manual) | Feeding our children | Handling critical family issues | Importance of play | Keeping children healthy | Protecting children | Sexual education | Social Emotional Support | Supporting children in their education

MORE INFORMATION

[www.helpachild/ecd-malawi](http://www.helpachild/ecd-malawi)



## POSITIVE PARENTING SKILLS

### STORY OF GOLLIE

Gollie is a mother of two children, namely Esther who is ten years old and is doing her primary five at Mwitha School and Faith who is six years old and is in primary 1. Gollie is married and lives in William Ngwenya village (Mzimba, Malawi). She is a member of Madalitso parenting club which started in the year 2017, the same year she joined.

The family are peasant farmers who derive their livelihood from farming. They produce enough food to feed themselves each and every year. Despite the fact that the family produces enough food each year, their children didn't grow up healthy because they suffered from nutrition related disorders. Faith grew up with low weight due to poor feeding practices. *"I couldn't understand why my child was registering underweight every time I went with her for routine growth monitoring check up despite the fact that I used to feed her quite a lot,"* recalls Gollie.

In 2017, the program rolled out a parenting challenge program with the objective of supporting parents and guardians with positive parenting skills. Fortunately, Gollie expressed interest and joined one of the parenting clubs. Once, she joined the parenting clubs she started enjoying the lessons which were being shared in the parenting clubs because they seemed to address some of challenges her family was facing. One of the sessions she enjoyed most was 'Feeding our children', where she learnt a lot on how

to prepare a nutritious diet for the children which is rich in the six food groups. She also learnt on how to establish a kitchen garden for supporting the nutrition requirements for her children.

*"Since I started attending parenting sessions; I am able to prepare nutritious meals for my children which is enabling my children to grow healthy and strong."*

After completing the parenting sessions Gollie had this to say; *"I and my husband, we always produced enough food from the crops we grow but we lacked knowledge on how to prepare nutritious meals which provides normal growth for the children. Since I started attending parenting sessions; I am able to prepare nutritious meals for my children which is enabling my children to grow healthy and strong."* Only three months after practicing preparation of balanced diet for her children, Faith's growth curve started improving as the girl started putting up more weight. Faith is no longer underweight now because her growth curve is normal as a result of enhanced knowledge in preparation of balanced diet.