

The Parenting **Challenge**



Unpacking: The Parenting Challenge

What is The Parenting Challenge?

The Parenting challenge is an interactive program in group setting for parents* about parenting culture and practices, communication and the division of roles in the household.

The program is designed by Help a Child and its partners in Malawi and Uganda in 2017.

* Parents include: M/F, biological and non-biological.

The goal:

- Improve **parenting skills**.
- **Improve attitude and understanding** of role of father and mother.
- Promote positive **communication skills**.

To ensure fathers and mothers can provide adequate and loving/caring support to their children.



Why is it necessary?

Parenting is not easy, for nobody, but when you live in harsh circumstances, it is even more difficult. Yet children need a **safe environment**, with people who care for them, as members of the entire community. It breaks the cycle of violence and instability, or as many parents said: "It brings **harmony in the house.**"



How does it work?

Groups meet weekly or bi-weekly for two hours to discuss modules. Modules are chosen based on group preferences and can entail topics such as:

- Basic parenting skills (roles, communication, culture)
- Protection
- Education
- Health & nutrition
- Child discipline
- Handling parents issues for single parents
- Social emotional support

Each module includes sessions, starting with welcome & introduction of the topic, interactive exercises/groupwork, assignment and closure.



How to run the Parenting Challenge:

- Train Community Facilitators in facilitating the Parenting Challenge.
- Form diverse parenting groups by including both men and women.
- Start with the Basic parenting skills-module.
- Select and start with additional modules, based on group preferences.
- Support parents initiative.

Key conditions

- ✓ Train and supervise the Community Facilitators.
- ✓ Connect with other community services like health, education, agriculture and child protection.
- ✓ Ensure embedding in community development activities.

What makes the Parenting Challenge successful?

Peer-to-peer learning by parents rather than information transfer by trainer.

-  Easy language and set-up to support facilitators to the max.
-  Selected topics are recognizable for parents around the world.
-  Based on exchange between parents rather than information transfer.
-  Involving mothers and fathers, as well as other caregivers.
-  Fun and interactive work methods to activate group members.
-  Concrete assignments and ideas to put theory into practice.

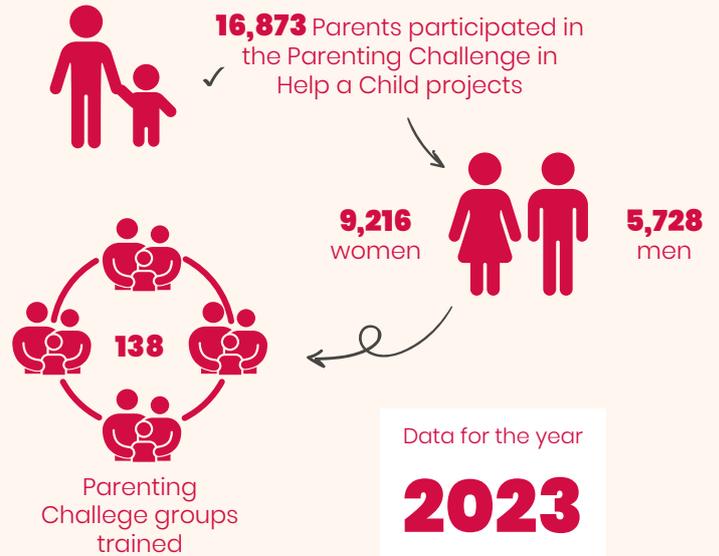


'Before, I didn't know that advising would help my child. But in our parenting group, we learned it's better to advise our children than to beat them.'
- Mother (Malawi)

Evidence & Track Record

Countries running the Parenting Challenge or equivalent:

- ✓ Malawi
- ✓ Uganda
- ✓ Kenya
- ✓ Burundi
- ✓ Ethiopia
- ✓ Egypt
- ✓ Tanzania
- ✓ Albania
- ✓ Romania
- ✓ Moldova
- ✓ Ukraine
- ✓ DR Congo
- ✓ South Sudan
- ✓ Somalia



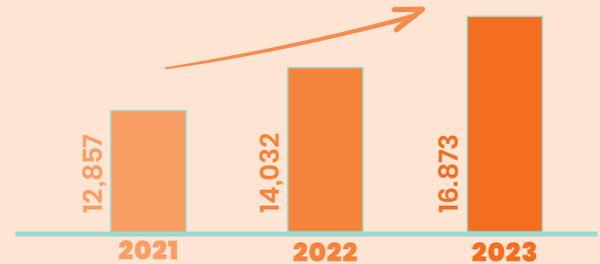
The Parenting Challenge Evidence

The Parenting Challenge has been developed in collaboration with the Dutch University of Utrecht. Several studies have been conducted into the effectiveness of the Parenting Challenge. Key results include:

- Reduction of domestic violence was one of the most notable changes also mentioned a lot by children themselves.
- Improved communication between partners (F/M) and between parents and children.
- Improved support for children in terms of education.
- Improved hygiene at household level (rubbish pits, pit latrine's, handwashing facilities).
- Children eat healthier or/and more meals a day.

Track-record the Parenting Challenge Help a Child

Number of participants in The Parenting Challenge in multiple countries, including Malawi, Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda:



Since 2017, over **100.000** parents participated in the Parenting Challenge.

*Based on input of our partners.

The Parenting Challenge results

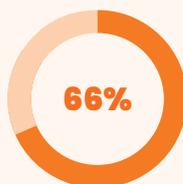
Help a Child, the Parenting Challenge program Malawi (2021)



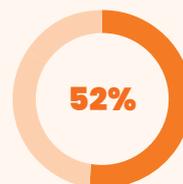
Parents find parenting easier



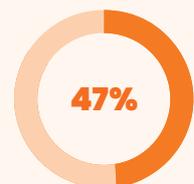
Less parents beat their children to discipline them



More parents feel like they understand their child



Decrease of domestic violence between spouses



Increase in parents being able to meet children's emotional and physical needs

'I'm happy in my mind. I was afraid of getting beaten and getting hurt. Now I'm not afraid anymore. Also, she stopped shouting at me. Before, I was afraid to ask my mom for anything, but now I'm not afraid and can talk openly to my mom.'

- Girl (12 years)

About Help a Child

Help a Child exists to help provide a promising future for children in need, their family and their entire community. Our DNA allows us to do that in a way that defines us, and is unique for our way of working. The building blocks of this DNA are:

Sustainable impact

Help a Child creates sustainable impact for children. It is our task to provide children living in poverty with a better future. We achieve this by empowering our target groups, enabling them to independently enhance their living conditions after we are gone.

Empower people

As a Christian organization, we believe that every human being and every child is uniquely created in the image of God. This means that our efforts are aimed at championing people who have the strength and perspective to improve their own situation, even in challenging contexts.

Holistic care

Help a Child understands that poverty is multidimensional, therefore we believe in holistic approaches. Providing children with a better future is a comprehensive goal, encompassing multiple domains. We aim for impact that will make children Healthy & Strong, Educated for Life, Social & Emotionally Developed and living with Hope & Dignity. As a small organization, we focus our activities on what we do best and cooperate with other actors to achieve the rest.

Engage our Constituency

Our reason to exist is to serve children in need, our right to exist is our constituency. To engage people in the Netherlands in our work is crucial in a world in which we are connected as brothers and sisters. As an organization we feel the obligation, due to our shared values of compassion and love, to function as a bridge between the families in the Netherlands and families in poverties worldwide.

Motivated by Christian values

We believe that the motivation with which we do our work makes a difference. As Help a Child colleagues we are inspired to love, called to justice, moved to mercy, invited to reconciliation, motivated to stewardship and dependent of God. These Christian principles inspire us to give our best in all circumstances.

WHERE WE WORK

