

MICROMODULE SYLLABUS

Family Support

Lesson 3: What to support to family?

Introduction:

What support does the family need? This module will introduce and explain the content that is necessary to support to families. This suggests family support workers to select and prepare support content to meet the needs of each family.

The aim of this learning task is:

To be able to list the content that is necessary to support to family, explain the meaning of that support contents and analyze the use value of illustrative videos, can name some parent support services in local area.

Task instructions:

- Read the information below and list the contents that need support for parents and families.

- Group discussion to answer the following questions:

1. In the video you just watched, what content are supported for parents?
2. In your locality, what activities and organizations are there to support parents?
3. In your locality, where do parents usually go when they discover their child has special needs?

Module information:

When having a child with a disability, the child's family has faced changes in their own roles. The child's disability affects the psychological and daily life of the family, affecting the family's social environment, expectations, family development plans and family economic life. Difficulties experienced by families may include: changing in child's emotions, child's behavior and personality; accessing to information as well as family support services; or having financial problems. Therefore, families with children with disabilities need to be provided with information about health services, policy, and way to access services. Having a child with a disability is a difficult and stressful situation for parents. Because children with disabilities have special care and educational needs, their parents often worry about their children's future and this negatively affects their mental health. Economic difficulties also contribute to increased stress among parents of children with disabilities.

Correctly determining the support needs of families with disabled children is very important because this ensures the selection of content, methods and the effective development and implementation of family support plans. When parents are guided and supported, children's behavioral problems are also influenced and changed in a positive direction, helping to reduce the challenging behaviors of children with autism (Tran Van Cong, 2017; Gerow et al., 2017). Consulting and supporting parents of children with autism spectrum disorder is necessary so that parents have understanding and skills to intervene and educate children with this disorder.

Support for parents and families of children with disabilities includes many different contents, because in different socio-economic contexts, different type of disabilities, the severity of disability as well as the age of the child, the family will

have different support needs. In general, support content for parents and families of children with disabilities may include:

- Information support :

The child's family needs to know information and knowledge related to the type and characteristics of the child's disability; educational, medical, and social services that children can receive; service and financial benefits the child and family may have; Legal documents on the rights of people with disabilities; locations of service providers, costs for those services... When parents of children with disabilities are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills to support their children at home, the child's development opportunities will significantly increase.

- Support knowledge and skills to carry out child care and education activities at home: Including learning about methods and strategies to improve the quality of child care and education, how to integrate educating children in daily living activities, how to assess the child's current abilities, how to determine support goals as well as develop an intervention plan for children at home. Research by the author group Searing et al. (2015) after focusing on supporting parents in rural areas, found that the most useful support is sharing realistic knowledge and skills to apply with their children.

- Medical care support: Some children with disabilities may need special medical care, medications or special equipments. In such cases, the support related to medical care is also essential for children and their families.

- Psychological support :

Reality shows that parents and family members of children with disabilities face many psychological difficulties due to the burden of raising and educating their children. Studies show that parents of children with disabilities have

significantly higher stress levels than parents of children with normal development, and they also face many family conflicts such as conflicts with their spouses, the child's siblings or other family members such as the child's grandparents. In addition, they are also under a lot of pressure from the social community such as discrimination, lack of goodwill, and negative comments such as saying that parents are the reason why their children have disabilities.

Author Nguyen Thi Viet Ha (2017) mentioned that "parents of children with autism spectrum disorder have to face the judgement look from people around them, other family members and relatives, along with the disappointment when getting the diagnosis result about their children disabilities. This is a huge challenge for parents of autistic children, so parents always want to receive psychological help to overcome discrimination and injustice towards their children and themselves.

Lindblad et al. (2005) affirmed that: When there is no support, parents have to go through a constant struggle to have faith in their own role and recognize the value of their children. When supported, parents feel more confident about themselves and their children, they seem to be energized to carry out the role of parents, they recognize that sharing the goals and tasks of educating children is the most necessary thing for parents.

Bromley et al. (2004) emphasized that resting and relaxing is one of the basic needs for parents of children with autism to regenerate energy and renew their lives, thereby rediscovering motivation and value for family activities in life.

Therefore, psychological support for parents of children with disabilities also needs to get attention.

- Support for children and families of children with disabilities to participate in recreational and community activities:

Through such activities, parents of children with disabilities can connect with other parents, improve the confidence of children with disabilities, and speak up for children with disabilities as well as their families. This can lead to changes in policies and services for children and families of children with disabilities.

From the above information, we can see an overview of the difficulties and needs of parents. Especially the psychological difficulty of accepting a child with autism spectrum disorder, overcoming social inferiority and the need to gain more knowledge and skills about their children's disabilities (Woodgate, Ateah & Secco, 2008). Until recently, many parents still have the same worries and feelings, so organizing support for parents of children with disabilities is really necessary.

Case studies:

Video guiding parents from Khanh Tam Online Special Education Training Center (Hanoi, Vietnam)
(Video Online Training with code: "Video KT")

References:

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7. Woodgate , R.L., Ateah , C., & Secco , L. (2008). Living in a world of our own: The experience of parents who have a child with autism. *Qualitative Health Research* 18(8), 1074–1083.