

MICROMODULE SYLLABUS

Family Support

Lesson 5: Group support for family

Introduction:

This module introduces the role of group support for families and the process of organizing support activities for groups of families of children with disabilities. In this process, the module will introduce specific operations to organize activities and notes when organizing activities. The module also introduces a case study who participated in a group support, describes the activities that the mother has participated in and the products the mother has made. The module also has a video illustrating the online lesson the teacher used in the group support process.

The aim of this learning task is:

- To explain the role of group support for family, to draw a model of the process of organizing group support activities for family, to analyze the role and meaning of group support for the case study and related to the local situation.

Task instructions:

- Read the lesson information below and answer the questions:

1. Why should there be group support for parents of children with disabilities?
2. Draw the process diagram of the group support steps then analyze the meaning of the steps to organize group support? What support steps can the video I illustrate be used in (Video Online Training with code: "Video KT")?

- Find out if there are group support for parents of children with disabilities in your

locality? If so, please introduce that model.

- In the case study, what benefits did parents of children with disabilities receive by participating in the group support? (Draw a mind map of the benefits that mother H received from participating in the group support)

Module information:

5.1. The role of group support for families

Support for groups of families and parents of children with disabilities is a professional housework that gathers families and parents into groups, organizes common activities, and connects parents on the basis of sharing and helping. Each other, connecting with each other according to certain group and individual goals, thereby helping families and parents have a positive mentality, gain more knowledge and skills in caring for and educating children. educate your children.

Each of these support groups needs a professional person to lead the group's activities. Professionals can be special education teachers, disability education support staff, or social workers with people with disabilities. The leader is also called the operator.

Support activities for groups of parents and young families have the following roles:

- Group support activities can provide parents with increased knowledge, understanding and acceptance, knowledge and skills to address children's behavioral problems (Banach et al., 2010; Law et al., 2001).

- Group support activities help connect parents of children with autism 3-4 years old together to form a community that can share and support each other psychologically: Parents feel more connected and capable. cooperate with people (Law et al., 2001). Support groups provide a sense of belonging and empathy from

fellow sufferers and professionals, helping them handle emotional problems better (Barnett et al., 2003).

- Group support activities to promptly answer concerns and problems of parents and children.

- Group support activities are a bridge between professionals and parents, parents and children: Support groups effectively provide services, diagnostic activities, assessments and interventions for children (Mansell & Morris, 2004).

5.2. Organize group support activities for families of children with disabilities

According to Barnett et al. (2003) and Banach et al. (2010), when organizing group support activities for parents of children with disabilities, professionals often organize sessions and working sessions with groups of parents.

With the characteristic of supporting parents and families in groups, group support activities are organized according to the following specific steps.

a) Step 1: Establish parent and family group relationships

This is the step of creating a group, establishing relationships and common perspectives in the group among parents and families. This step usually includes the following activities:

- + Parents introduce themselves and share stories of their children, family and themselves

- + Parents share psychological issues: difficulties and challenges when facing their children's behavior

- + Parents discuss the dreams and wishes of parents and children. For example: Create a highlight for your family with a fun avatar, slogan, etc.

- + Parents provide estimated times for regular group activities

- + Parents make group rules for everyone to follow

- + Parents agree on contact methods: facebook, zalo, email, handwritten letter,...

If possible, this step of setting up a group should be done in person, so everyone can meet face to face to increase connection.

b) Step 2: Provide documents and knowledge about the characteristics, intervention strategies, and education of children with disabilities

In this step, the specialist provides parents with necessary information about child development, intervention strategies, and child education. It can be done in the following order:

- + First, parents share the knowledge they know and share the activities and solutions that parents have done with their children (possibly through pictures and videos). Parents also tell the operator what knowledge they need to learn more.

- + After that, the operator classifies, systematizes the information, and generalizes the information by explaining and explaining. During this process, the operator can use images and videos to illustrate. The moderator can also hand out hard copy documents, provide information about books, newspapers, and information pages for parents to refer to. Encourage parents to search for resources on websites about children with disabilities and scientific research forums about concerns.

When providing information to parents, the operator will prioritize providing the knowledge that many parents want to learn the most. At the same time, the moderator should guide parents to choose the appropriate materials that best suit them based on their child's level, characteristics, interests, habits, behavior,

and abilities.

If direct communication is not possible, parents need to have technological means such as phones and computers connected to the internet to be able to participate in discussion groups with other parents on social platforms such as Zoom Meeting. Technology also helps parents find information in books, magazines, websites, and experts, making it easier for parents to access knowledge.

c) Step 3: Guide the group of parents to identify goals and plan interventions for their children

Sharing expertise helps parents develop educational goals and manage their children's behavior. The facilitator, along with the parents and team members, will work together and come up with specific intervention goals for their child.

- The moderator guides parents through the assessment results, based on the assessment results to understand the child's current functional level and understand the child's development goals. The operator can guide parents on how to observe their children at home and further determine their children's needs and abilities, based on which to determine development goals for their children at home.

- Parents set priority goals for their children's development. Then, parents discuss and choose goals that are suitable for their child and family conditions.

- The administrator will agree and share with parents how to set goals that are achievable and highly feasible. Setting goals should be based on the child's zone of proximal development. Write goals according to SMART goal standards.

For example: Goal: "I can continuously string 10 marbles during individual lessons within 1 week", Goal: "During individual lessons, I play toss and catch the

ball with the teacher at a distance of 1m, I catch 8/10 results, each practice for 1 month.

Parents also discuss how to find and mobilize support resources to achieve this goal.

d) Step 4: Train a group of parents in skills to work with their children

This is an organized step for parents to practice and practice skills with their children. In this step, parents share and discuss with other parents in the group about the process of working with their children, talk about difficulties when organizing activities with their children, and listen to others' sharing to create motivation. force and learn from experience for yourself. In this step, the facilitator also organizes activities to teach parents some skills to work with their children.

The activities that parents regularly conduct with their children are daily living activities and play activities. The operator can guide parents on how to interact and play with children. After that, parents can role-play to practice, and everyone gives feedback after each role-play. Finally, parents discuss and draw conclusions about how to organize play and some principles for playing with their children at home.

e) Step 5: Instruct a group of parents how to choose or make furniture and toys for children with disabilities

To increase opportunities to play with their children, parents also need to know how to choose or make items and toys for their children.

The operator shares with parents about children's equipment and toys. After that, parents and members of the group will work together to make learning materials for activities with their children: picture cards, activity boards, reward

boards, games, homemade items, building social stories, ... on the basis of appropriateness to the child's ability, according to the characteristics, preferences, and playing abilities to be able to choose toys that are real objects that can be held, touched, and eaten; or objects simulated by models: models made of plastic, foam, fabric, cotton...; or with pictures, lotto, labels, videos,... follow these steps:

- + Parents provide supplies needed for their activities
- + Choose to use operating equipment according to what criteria
- + Make homemade tools
- + Bring materials into activities with your child

f) Step 6: Discuss and share with successful people

In the process of teaching their children at home, parents often encounter many problems and do not know how to handle them properly, do not understand what to do with their children in this case, and sometimes become helpless. In this step, parents listen to suggestions and shares from those who have gone before and have succeeded. From there, parents can find sympathy, concern, and then have the motivation to consider applying the experiences practiced by previous parents.

+ Parents who have successfully practiced will share educational techniques, organize activities with their children, challenges, psychological difficulties, knowledge, skills they have faced and how to overcome them, and support resources. support (including local resources) found and how those resources are operationalized. Parents can watch videos of parents and children's activities together to illustrate.

- + Other parents share their own experiences and things they have learned.

g) Step 7: Reevaluate the implementation process and plan for the future

Parents have time to practice supporting their children at home, then they also need to re-evaluate the implementation process and plan for the future.

This step is typically performed throughout the group support process and at the end of the group support program.

- About the purpose of evaluation: Evaluating parent group support activities is to help parents review their children's progress in activities guided by parents, as well as parents self-assess their own changes. When teaching children to make necessary adjustments in the plan later. The moderator also understands parents better, collects information, needs, and missing skills of parents, thereby selecting appropriate materials and measures to guide parent groups, pair groups, and build group accordingly.

- Regarding evaluation content: According to Vitsika & Sharpley (1999), evaluating the effectiveness of group support activities often focuses on whether parents find the activities useful or not and often focuses on 4 areas: self-esteem, perception or self-esteem, self-efficacy, group cohesion, and stress levels.

+ Assess parents' cognitive capacity: when starting to join the group and before intervention for their children. To know what level parents are at, what content needs to be provided to parents. Parents' self-efficacy includes: understanding of their child's problems, some skills to support their child, skills to find information and seek support,...

+ Stress level assessment: This is also a psychological assessment for parents.

+ Evaluating group cohesion is evaluating the process of parents participating in the group.

Sometimes, parents also evaluate the quality of teachers/supporters. This shows parents' wishes and needs for instructors and leaders in caring for their children with autism.

-About assessment tools:

When evaluating their child's progress, parents will rely on their child's goals and personal educational plan.

When evaluating their own changes, parents can evaluate changes in their psychological state, emotions, feelings, their own skills when interacting with their children, and their skills in using toys. with children, etc. The commonly used tool is the rating scale for parents with Likert scales (Vitstika & Sharpley, 1999). The Family Empowerment Scale is often mentioned and used because it ensures effective assessment of group support activities (Koren et al., 1992). This scale has a standardized Finnish version (Vuorenmaa et al., 2014).

- About how to proceed: Organize group members to share what they have done, comment on their children's progress, and their own feelings. Parents take turns listening to each other, then drawing their own conclusions or lessons and determining what to do next (explaining why their children haven't been able to do it, what needs to be adjusted). The moderator refrains from making assessments, only giving suggestions, praise, and encouragement to parents.

- Regarding the time of implementation: This exchange and evaluation activity can be conducted weekly or monthly, in the form of face-to-face group meetings or online group meetings, so that everyone can share information and send feedback. feedback or results of practice with your child.

Thus, when organizing group support activities for young parents, they are often divided into sessions, specific sessions and conducted according to

chronological order and psychological approach, approaching the process of knowledge formation. , skills for parents. During this process, it must be organized for parents to connect, share, exchange information, present, and participate in group activities.

Experience in organizing group support activities for young parents in many countries often connects parents by local area and ends the support program in about 6 to 8 sessions by finding local resources.

But in educational institutions in Vietnam today, educational institutions also provide intervention and educational services for children, so group support activities need to be organized continuously, closely following the schedule. In the process of implementing a child's individual education plan, group members who are parents of children studying at a specialized educational facility will be much more convenient in supporting parents. Mutual aid and specialized educational institutions support young families.

Case Studies:

Mother H's family, this year Mother H is 38 years old and is currently doing freelance business. There is a child, D, born on May 13, 2019, gender: Male, the second child in a family of 2 children. By the time the parents received support, the child was 3 years and 11 months old, diagnosed with a spectrum disorder. mild autism. He has a simple language, speaks proactively on a number of topics, understands the objects around him, he can speak, point to the desired object when the need arises, he has some expressions such as: interact with eye contact, do not play with friends of the same age or say meaningless sounds when sitting

alone, ability to remember knowledge is more difficult than peers, gross motor walking, normal grasping, motor coordination Muscle group coordination is still limited, he cannot immediately imitate actions with his teacher and friends, and his fine motor skills in his hands and eyes are still poor. The ability to interact and communicate with peers and adults is not yet there, and the child does not initiate games on his own.

When she received the news that her child had autism spectrum disorder, Ms. H felt it was unacceptable, she was very sad, did not think her child had autism spectrum disorder and thought it was because she did not spend much time That's why I let you suffer like this. She feels psychologically inferior to everyone around her. However, my mother tried to find knowledge about children with autism spectrum disorder and read a lot about it. She and her family were very worried because her parents were only self-employed, the family's income was not stable, and the time to play with their children was limited to just a few evenings.

Parents have also actively tried to interact and play with their children, etc. However, the child does not want to play with their parents, causing the parents to completely fail when playing with their children, not knowing how to overcome it. fix those problems. Parents really want someone to help them overcome these problems. Parents learned about Huong Duong Center (Thanh Hoa province) and sent their children to study for 4 months. When they learned that group support activities for parents were organized, they registered and volunteered to participate. Join a parent group.

After joining the group, she received a lot of psychological and knowledge support from other parents. Mon H. said:

"My life is lucky to meet the brothers and sisters in the group. Because everyone here is very warm, very happy, although sometimes sad, discouraged, difficult, they always receive each other's encouragement to continue on this arduous path. I feel even more confident because you only have one childhood and if I don't grasp it, I will make you lose a lot of things. If I don't change, I will regret a lot later."

When participating in activities with the parent support group, mom H. took the practice very seriously, although she herself also had difficulty using social networking sites to share information, etc. That also somewhat affects the mother's exchange process. In the spirit of learning, my mother received support from the parents in the group and learned how to use Zalo software or Facebook to connect and share with everyone. Mom H. also actively apply measures implemented in the group, apply strategies in intervention and planning and instruction steps for their children.

An activity the mother organizes and plans: "Goal: your child will be able to wear shoes properly without assistance every time he goes out within 2 weeks."

By wearing shoes, children can recognize their own shoes and those of others, and love wearing shoes when going out (see Fig. 1). Besides, mom H. also collects images associated with their children's necessary activities (see Fig. 2).

"During the process of supporting my child, I closely followed the changes and also noticed my child's progress. My child especially liked the images, so I searched and selected very vivid images to apply and let him use them!"

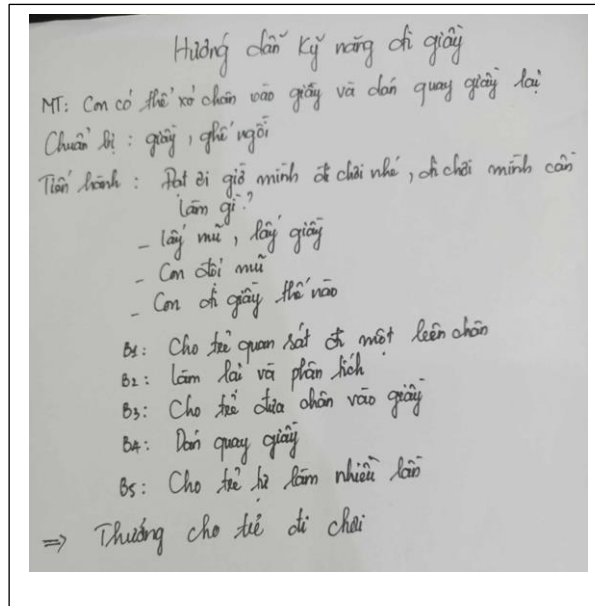


Figure 1. The plan to develop shoe-wearing skills for child D made by mom H.

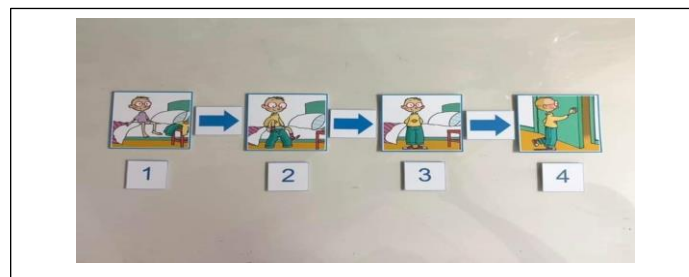


Figure 2. The process of dressing for child D go to school used by mom H.

Through the process of supporting parents in the group and the process of applying measures, it was found that mon H's progress was quite good. She could recognize her child's abilities and from there can choose appropriate intervention methods and strategies for her child. She also admitted that she felt much more mentally stable in the process of caring for and raising her child, no longer felt alone or frightened, and felt reassured because she knew that she had experienced parents on her side and could learn from experience.

Video illustration: Online lecture:

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

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