Learning Unit 4

Facilitate the development of babies, toddlers and young children

After completing this learning unit, you will be able to facilitate the development of babies, toddlers and/or young children, and use communication effectively during facilitation, by successfully completing the following:

- Manage children in a manner that promotes development and is sensitive to the needs of individual children.

- Carry out facilitation in a manner that ensures the physical and emotional safety, security and comfort of the children.

- Carry out facilitation such that behaviour and life-skills are modelled in a developmentally appropriate manner.

- Ensure that facilitation assures the holistic development of children.

- Ensure that communication is responsive and promotes development.

- Ensure that verbal and non-verbal interactions are developmental.

- Use appropriate behaviour and conflict management.

Facilitate the development of babies, toddlers and young children

Facilitation that promotes the holistic development of babies, toddlers and young children should be characterised by nurturing warmth. By having a nurturing and emotionally warm tone in your approach to the children, you provide a solid foundation for their sense of security and self-acceptance. In such a climate of warmth the child feels free to play, explore, make mistakes and try again without fear of failure. Their self-image grows, they feel respected, can show initiative and try out new ideas and feel free to express their opinions.

4.1 Manage children in a manner that promotes development

Does nurturing mean there are no rules and limits? No, the opposite is true – the child experiences being cared for by having rules and limits too, as they provide structure, fairness, and containment (control). But the warm and caring attitude should come first, and the rules should be fitted into that, so that the child feels heard and understood and that his or her needs are being met. They then feels no anxiety about obeying a set of rules. The warm atmosphere allows children to succeed as they have a sense of inner security, and can do well at their particular level of skill.

Here are three ways in which you can become more of a nurturer:

1. Stay positive in responding to children

Keep a positive frame of mind for yourself and your learners. Respond consistently, notice their positive qualities, encourage the learners to stay positive too and start the day with a positive or caring greeting or message for each child. They will absorb and learn your positive attitude. Avoid saying "No, that's the wrong way"; rather simply encourage and show them again the right way: "See if you can do it this way next time".

2. Tune in and observe

Focus on the child's unique qualities, strengths and capabilities, and respond with acknowledgement, praise and encouragement. Review each child's well-being at specific points during the programme. For example, you could think back about the morning during snack time, and get a sense of how different children are coping with the demands of the programme or peer interaction. Listen whenever you can, ans pay attention to their free play or chatter. In this way you will get in touch with the child's mood and general well-being and have an opportunity to notice anything that may need your attention and support. (You will also learn to make observational notes about this tuning in.)

3. Take every opportunity to give positive attention

Always look for ways to encourage and be warm about any effort the children make, even if there is no effort – the children just want the sunshine of your love! Even if your style is not usually so jolly or outspoken, you can learn to pay attention first, and then to increase the warmth of that attention by degrees. Do this by reminding yourself of anyone who has been a caring or inspiring person in your own life. By being more nurturing, you do half the work of facilitating. And if you improve the child's self-image and build self-confidence, you make it possible for the child to tackle developmental tasks with freedom and confidence.

4.1.1 Manage children in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of individual children

Since all the domains of development are linked, you can promote development in all domains by presenting them in a nurturing and warm way to establish the child's sense of security and acceptance. This provides a background of empowerment, trust and freedom which allows the child to play, experiment, be him/herself and make mistakes without fear. Research has shown that a nurturing environment enhances and improves self-image in the following ways:

- Children perceive a sense of warmth and love.

- They are offered a degree of security, allowed to grow and afforded the opportunity to try new things without fear of failure.

- They are respected as individuals.

- They are encouraged to develop initiative and new ideas.

- They are encouraged to express their opinions.

Nurtured (cherished) children recognise that there are clear and definite limits within the environment, that there are rules and standards that are reasonably, fairly and consistently enforced. This gives them a sense of what is allowed and a sense of where they fit into those boundaries. When they feel that they are heard and understood they can more easily accept the rules for behaviour, as their needs are being met. Most important, perhaps, is that nurtured children have a chance to succeed at their particular level of accomplishment.

4.2 Carry out facilitation in a manner that ensures the physical and emotional safety, security and comfort of the children

When facilitating an ECD session, you should carry out the facilitation in a manner that ensures the physical and emotional safety, security and comfort of the children.

How can the ECD practitioner be more nurturing? Here are a few ways in which you can become more of a nurturer:

- Build self-esteem.

- Be aware of the vulnerable child.

- Cultivate a positive attitude.

- Be observant.

- Be prepared to give approval and positive attention.

Building self-esteem

Self-esteem is the essential ingredient in human beings that increases personal growth, happiness and development on all levels.

By showing warmth, respect, responsiveness and sensitivity to the individual child, their context and their needs, the facilitator can promote the development of the children in his or her care. The facilitator's warm and caring attitude is the "fertiliser" that grows the child's self-esteem.

Be aware of the vulnerable child

Think of the child as a vulnerable plant that will bend and wilt if it hears unkind words. Try to speak kindly at all times. If you must raise your voice, do it only occasionally – think how much you dislike it when you have been shouted at in the past. Show warmth in the way you speak, use a bit of humour to show you are understanding, and avoid using negative terms such as "Don't hesitate!" "Don't be stupid!" "Can't you understand?" or labels and judgements like "You're so clumsy!". Show tolerance, patience and kindness in all your behaviours, and the children will learn to communicate in the same way.

> Good alternative ways to direct children to a better solution or better behaviour are through encouragement and a "try again" approach:
>
> "Would you like to give it another try?"
> "You're trying hard; let's just see if a different way will
> help." "Keep trying, you're on the right track."

Cultivate a positive attitude

You can best help children to feel good about themselves by being consistent and having a good attitude yourself, especially about children's positive qualities. Make a conscious effort every day to make your children aware of their positive attributes. Every day, remind yourself of how important it is to say something positive.

If you are working with younger children, start the day by deliberately greeting each child with a caring statement, even if it is as basic as telling the child that you like the way in which he/she said good morning! Remember that your talk becomes their inner self talk. Consistency is very important; make a conscious effort every day to help the children develop positive feelings about themselves.

Be observant

Whether the child feels loved or unloved has a big effect on his or her development. To foster a child's positive self-image, you must notice and comment on the child's unique qualities, strengths and capabilities. Any desirable trait of behaviour, act of thoughtfulness, display of creativity or special effort should be noted and acknowledged. The ECD practitioner should, therefore, work hard to be observant, by mentally noting children's behaviour and characteristics. During the day you should have a quick check-in scan of each child at least three times during your programme, to get a sense of how that child is coping with the day's challenges. Do this by looking at the child and listening to any interaction or free play. This allows you to tune into the child's mood and general well-being and to notice anything different that may need your attention and support.

Be prepared to give approval and positive attention

Three- and four-year-olds believe parents and other adults are super human beings – they can even see through drawn curtains! The child accepts that these "all powerful gods" treat me as I deserve. What they say is what I am. All a child really wants and needs are your approval and positive attention. Do not neglect to provide these things.

As an ECD practitioner you can learn to be a nurturer (carer) to provide an environment that enhances and improves a child's self-image.

4.3 Carry out facilitation such that behaviour and life-skills are modelled

In most case children learn what they see powerful or loved people doing. The most important person to the child is you, the classmates and teacher and her parents and siblings and friends. Your role as a practitioner is to engage with the child deliberately in order to encourage and promote her development. Her learning from you takes place not only because of the things that you do but also because of how significant you are and how that affects her motivation to learn.

Children learn and imitate behaviour they have observed in other people. There are certain conditions for social learning to take place:

- The child has to be paying attention.

- Once the child has seen the behaviour it can be remembered and practised and improved.

- If the child is motivated, the social learning progress will be successful and the child will imitate the behaviour.

Life skills are the social skills which humans use to manage their own lives and their relationships with others.

Modelling is the word used to describe the social learning that takes place when the child or observer identifies with a role model and unconsciously copies her or shapes his or her own behaviour to fit that of the model. "Modelling" here refers to the way in which the facilitator provides an example to the children concerning behaviour.

4.4 Ensure that facilitation assures the holistic development of children

Not only are you educating through the activities you are presenting, but you are also communicating knowledge, values, attitudes, life skills and physical habits simply by being in the presence of children.

Attending and problem-solving

- Every activity you present to the children shows that you are attending to them and to the activity. Your concentration, enjoyment of the activity, willingness to admit that you may not know everything and make mistakes sometimes, are all good qualities that the children will see and absorb.

- Your focus of attention when helping a child with a puzzle or with cleaning up after an art session, demonstrates how to get the job done, and how to solve problems through perseverance and effort.

- Attending and problem-solving are core behaviours in all learning and by modelling them, you set a good example for the children to follow and succeed at their own learning.

The other valuable skills which you model for the children can broadly be called, "*life skills*". Life Skills include:

- Managing the self (care for the self and knowledge of the self); managing relationships with others (family and friends), and managing one's relationship with society.

- To the child, the caregiver represents the outside world. The important skill which the children will learn from you by modelling, are cooperation and competition, conflict solving, building and keeping friendships, managing relationships with sincerity, sharing and loyalty. You are an example for the children to follow.

Care for the self

The basic building block of relationships is the relationship to the self. Your relationship to yourself provides you with the vehicle which carries you through your life, and it affects your work as an ECD facilitator. The following guidelines for a healthy relationship with yourself will also have an effect on everyone around you:

- Accept yourself.

- Be friends with your body and treat it kindly.

- Trust your intuition.

- Allow feelings their appropriate place and time.

- Comfort and reward yourself with the things that are familiar from your culture or religion or experience, to support yourself through tough times.

- Do not make judgments about yourself or others but take responsibility for the results of your actions and take corrective action if needed.

- Take physical care of yourself. Your clean hands and nails, clean clothes and fresh smile are reassuring to the children and show that you respect them as social beings. Teaching the children hygiene (hand washing, face washing) and noticing when they need their nails cut, or telling them to keep their hair out of their eyes with a hairclip while they play, will have no impact if your own nails are dirty and your own hair is hanging in front of your eyes.

Relating to others

In interacting with a baby, singing or talking to him or her, you show caring behaviour that any observer (another baby or child in the room, or a colleague passing by) will see and remember. In all your relationships, observers learn about your values from your behaviour and communication.

Why is holistic facilitation important?

These interrelated areas of development all continue to develop while the child is in your care. With your knowledge of child development, your commitment to children's rights and needs, and your personal values of caring and nurturing, you can successfully guide the child to experience all aspects of herself as equally valuable and important. If you don't do this, part of his/her ability may easily be neglected or part of his/her emotional development delayed or discouraged.

How to facilitate in a way that promotes holistic development

Holistic development can be achieved through interactive play, storytelling, listening to music, discussing feelings, drama and role play. Children also need to be exposed to a variety of resources that they can explore in a variety of ways.

Children need to be treated as special. When you plan your ECD programme you must take the children's individual learning needs into account.

Children learn best when they do and see, and when they can play freely, explore, discover and solve problems.

Holistic learning happens when learning areas are combined, for example teaching about water at a stream, using containers catching and releasing tadpoles, listening to stories about water like Noah's Ark, learning a water song.

Your example and effort

It is your responsibility to use your knowledge, skills attitudes and values and your own whole personhood to meet the child on all levels. Remember that the child is growing and changing and has the potential for becoming a balanced human being in a healthy relationship with the world. It depends on you as the representative of the outside world to guide, nurture and respect the child's changing abilities and interests.

Class Activity 7: Facilitate the development of babies, toddlers and young children

Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

4.5 Ensure that communication is responsive and promotes development

Young children do not have the language, communication and emotional skills that are necessary to express their thoughts and feelings, ideas and concerns. Language activities such as storytelling, rhymes and songs stimulate vocabulary and understanding of language so that they can begin to express their inner and outer worlds. When you talk to them, you encourage them to begin to verbalise their own thoughts, feelings and ideas. In this way, they become better at expressing the feelings and ideas through using language. You should make an effort to use your talking and listening skills, the two components of your communication, to promote the children's language development.

Overview aspects for discussion:

Your own communication

- Listen to the children.
- Respond with questions.
    - Ask leading questions.
    - Ask open-ended questions.

The children's communication:
- their communication about experiences
- their conversation with friends

Communication through activities:
- group time
- communication as a component of all activities
- stories
- praise and feedback

Listen to the children

Listening is probably one of the most important skills an ECD practitioner must develop. To foster good language skills, children must be allowed to say what they mean and be given the time to say it. It is very important for the practitioner to listen to what children say, and to respond to their messages.

Praise and feedback

Children feel encouraged and motivated when their creative efforts are discussed and praised; however, children can easily see through superficial or insincere praise. Avoid comments like these ones:

> *You're a clever girl!*
>
> *That's the best hand print I've ever seen!*
>
> *You're going to be a star when you grow up!*

Children do not benefit from comments like these. In fact, this kind of praise can put pressure on children to compete for approval, rather than simply to create a means of self-expression.

Using appropriate questioning techniques

If you as facilitator respond with interest, use attentive questions that show you have listened and understood what the child has said, use leading questions to expand the topic or extend the opportunity for conversation, you build upon what the child has to offer. These are examples of how to communicate responsibly to promote development. It expands the communication for the child and provides recognised stimulation which promotes better understanding and social skills.

Ask leading questions

Leading questions are questions that provide direction or guidance. Here are some examples:
- What do you think will happen if you mix blue paint and red paint together?
- What does the rabbit think about when everyone goes home for the day?
- Why do the blocks fall over when you put the big ones on top of the little ones?

You can get children to participate out by asking them leading questions and asking for clarification. Children will not develop good language and communication skills if they are never asked to think and use their imagination to picture themselves in a situation.

Ask open-ended questions

Open-ended questions are questions that have no right answers. Some examples are:

- What would you like to take on the picnic?

- How do you feel when it rains?

Open-ended questions will help children to draw their own conclusions using their observations and cognitive and imaginative skills. Such questions give children a chance to express their very own answers without worrying about whether they're right or wrong. This keeps a positive atmosphere in a learning situation, as any answer is accepted as a good enough contribution and the child finds it rewarding to participate.

You will have many opportunities for conversation with children when they arrive at the school, when they need help in the bathroom or during lunch. Take advantage of these moments to help children communicate. Ask them how things are going at home or how their pet is. Keep the tone of your interest light and positive, not inquisitive or negative. Let them tell you about what their brother or sister did at lunch time. These are very special moments that not only foster (promote) language development but also make a child feel special and secure. Bending down to a child's eye level will also give the message that you respect him/her and want to listen. Your responses should focus on both the message and the feeling, or tone, to give the child the sense of being heard.

The children will benefit from the communication in every activity. For example, they may need to listen to a story and create a picture inspired by the story. They may need to talk and work with a partner. They may need to take turns to communicate in a large group. As these examples show, every learning activity that children do will require them to talk, listen and communicate. In this way they develop their communication skills in an integrated way. Your responsiveness lies in providing these opportunities that the children need, to build their communication skills and understanding, thereby promoting their holistic development.

Stories

Stories that you tell and stories from books, all increase the variety of responses you can offer the children in your care. Stories are a tool to identify the children's own concerns, fears and experiences. One way to do this is by asking questions when using an illustrated book: "Look, the puppy has run away. Has anyone here had a pet that ran away?" Or, "Thandi is afraid of having an operation, has anyone here had an operation? How did you feel about it?"

Remember, children can relate to books by making the pictures, words and themes apply to their own lives. This does not mean that the books we choose have to replicate (be a copy of) our learners'lives. For example, children may be interested to read a story set in another country, like India. You can relate this story to the children's lives too:
"Terry is lost. She is crying. What do you think she is feeling? Have you ever been lost? How did you feel?"

We can also use books and stories to help children to become more aware of their emotions and give them the vocabulary to express how they are feeling. There are many books for young children that deal with specific issues. These books are very useful to help children to come to terms with difficult situations (for example divorce, death, fear of the dark and adoption). When we deal with difficult issues, we usually have to confront strong emotions like death, sadness, bullying fear, divorce or anger. Therefore, issues-based books and stories may also raise the subject of how to deal with feelings like anger, jealousy, fear and joy. By seeing how the characters in the story coped with their strong feelings, children can learn to deal with their own emotions. Your role as a practitioner is to steer carefully through strong emotions, accepting whatever the child would like to express, and responding with empathy and warmth.

4.5.1 Respond in a manner to show a clearly developed understanding of complex issues under discussion

Effective communication only takes place when the reaction of the receiving person is positive, according to the expectations of the sender. For example, by altering the intonation of the voice a customer may either receive the message that a waiter is really pleased to see and serve him or that he is merely another nuisance demanding to be served.

Effective internal and external verbal communication has a direct effect on a company's image and success in the following ways:

- Good, clear, concise communication eliminates time wastage in trying to resolve confusion, errors and conflicts.

- Customers/guests/patrons like feeling important and will return and recommend the establishment to others if they are treated with politeness and helpfulness.

This often results in returning customers and more business. If staff members display positive attitudes and speak to each other with respect, they reflect a positive company image. This results in customer having confidence in the establishment.

Types of verbal communication

Internal

Internal verbal communication may be categorised as follows:

- Intra-personal communication is communication with oneself. Talking to oneself is an example.

- Extra-personal communication (as illustrated above) refers to communication to an inanimate object or non-human (plant or animal).

> **EXAMPLE:**
> Talking to a cat/dog or saying: "You naughty table!" after a toddler bumps his head on it.

Interpersonal communication refers to an ordinary conversation on a one-on-one basis, or a very small group. It may also refer to communication between groups of individuals (group discussions or informally in a crowd).

> **EXAMPLE:**
> Communication within and between departments in an organisation

In general, as the size of the organisation increases, communication decreases and morale declines. The ever-increasing size of organisations means that lines of communication are further and further extended.

The more communication "centres" (e.g. departments within an organisation) a message has to pass through, the greater the chance of distortion (misrepresentation) or breakdown in communication.

Instead of trying to improve communication abilities of all employees, there are steps that may be taken to alleviate the situation:

- Establish open channels for feedback.

- Lay down policies and procedures for communication.

- Top management should communicate directly to all staff members using the public address system or public notice boards.

External

This refers to communication with an audience or people outside of an organisation.

> **EXAMPLES:**
> Suppliers, cleaning services, and out-sourced facilitators who conduct lectures in a corporation

When people are communicating face-to-face, body language plays a vital role to convey the appropriate messages.

4.5.2 Identify characteristics of a speaker's style and tone that attract or alienate an audience

In the business culture, it is imperative (essential) that you make eye contact if you want to make a positive impression on guests and maintain a relationship that is based on trust. Consider the following:

- Maintain eye contact without staring, as this is arrogant and threatening.

- Avoid blinking too much as this communicates nervousness and can be interpreted as an indication of dishonesty.

- Try to keep eye level on the same level as the guest. Stand if the guest is standing. If the guest is seated, accommodate this by standing back a little.

Facial expressions

Be aware of facial expressions when you speak to people. Professional service providers (e.g consultants or training providers) who deliver excellent service have alert, lively and appropriate facial expressions.

Avoid the following facial expressions:

- An expressionless or deadpan face that shows no emotion in response to what guests say makes them feel uncomfortable. This may be interpreted as boredom, rudeness or indifference.

- An arrogant or stern (strict) expression creates the impression of being superior to others.

- Grinning continually makes one look stupid. It creates the impression that the person does not understand what is being said or done. It may also create the impression of being deliberately unhelpful or even spiteful.

Gestures

Head and hand movements (gestures) often accompany speech:

- Smooth and wide gestures with the palms facing upwards are seen as warm and welcoming. People react positively to friendliness and helpfulness. Guests are naturally drawn to people who use calming gestures.

- Sharp, short gestures with the palms facing downwards, are aggressive and negative.

- People react by wanting to enter into or avoid disputes. When you are upset or if there is a need to discuss problems, you should make an effort to control your gestures. Problems are never resolved through aggressive gestures.

Posture

The way the speaker stands, sits or walks, indicates a great deal about the speaker's attitude, mood and self-esteem.

A correct posture entails the following:

- Stand upright with your arms comfortably at your sides.

- Keep shoulders dropped and slightly back.

- Stand with feet slightly apart to maintain balance.

- Walk briskly because it creates a professional impression.

- Sit upright with shoulders back. Slouching creates an impression of laziness.

- When speaking to guests either face them or turn the body slightly sideways towards them.

- Do not lean against walls or furniture.

- Do not fold your arms – they create the impression of being shy or arrogant.

- Standing with hands on hips creates an impression of arrogance.

- Swinging when speaking to people suggests a lack of self-confidence.

- Resting the face on hands while leaning on counters makes one appear lazy.

Personal space

This refers to the space each person has around him/her and into which intrusions (invasions) are unwelcome. The exact size of the area around each person differs and depends on a variety of factors including, personality, culture, family background and even the type of sport played.

Shy people usually need a wider personal space than outgoing people do. People instinctively indicate when their space is invaded - they either move away slightly, look uncomfortable, blink their eyes to show their discomfort, or look behind the speaker to avoid eye contact.

4.5.3 Identify and challenge the underlying assumptions, points of view and subtexts

A person's **point of view** is his/her manner of viewing things and describes an attitude or a position from which something is observed or considered. Your point of view is also referred to as your standpoint and reflects your attitude or outlook on events.

Subtext refers to the content underneath the spoken dialogue. Under dialogue, there can be conflict, anger, competition, pride, showing off, or other implicit ideas and emotions. Subtext refers to the unspoken thoughts and motives of participants in a conversation - what they *really* think and believe. Subtext just beneath the surface of dialogue makes life interesting, but it can also cause people to be and feel misunderstood.

An **underlying assumption** is something you believe to be fact, and therefore you base whatever follows on that underlying assumption.

4.6 Ensure that verbal and non-verbal interactions are developmental

Language helps us to make ourselves understood through using a united system of words. We take our language for granted until we suddenly cannot find the right words to explain ourselves, or when someone asks us to explain what we mean.

Have you ever tried explaining yourself to someone who is not a first language speaker of your language? It is much easier to be misunderstood in those circumstances. Even when you are not speaking loudly, you are using language to think and create meaning. We call this intra-personal communication. Int**er**personal communication happens between you and others, and int**ra**-personal communication happens within yourself. Speech and language includes but is not limited to:

- verbal or spoken communication
- written communication
- art, e.g. poetry, music, literature

Non-verbal

The term "non-verbal communication" is used when we refer to communication that is not written or spoken. Researchers have found that when we interact with each other, we interpret more meaning through non-verbal behaviour than through the verbal message. In fact, they claim that as much as 65% of the meaning is understood though non-verbal communication.

Body movement, posture and gestures

Body movements are strong indicators of how you feel. You can tell how your boss is feeling sometimes just by the way she is walking! Some people walk as if they are in a daze (research tell us that those are the ones who are likely to get mugged first – they are communicating: "come and get me!"), others walk with purpose. Sometimes you can see if a person is feeling dejected (sad) by the way they walk.

Your posture can also communicate a lot about your personality, your status, how you are feeling today, your self-image, and your gender. Have you ever noticed how a tall person who is uncomfortable with being tall may slouch their shoulders, whilst some 6-foot models "strut their stuff" on the catwalk? Do you see how this shows a difference in their self-image? But remember, a slouch may just be a temporary indication of a person's emotional state for the day – perhaps they only feel dejected now, and will bounce back when they have overcome their particular emotional hurdle. We must be careful not to generalise our interpretations.

Gestures are movements of the hands, arms, legs and feet. Hand gestures generally describe or emphasise verbal descriptions or communicate attitudes.

> **EXAMPLE**
> Crossed arms communicate a less aggressive attitude than putting your hands on your hips.

Facial expressions and eye contact

Facial expressions communicate how we are feeling and our reactions to the messages we are receiving. These are generally the real sign to how strongly we feel about the message we have received. Have you ever received unwelcome news, and you did not want to show people your reaction, but your face and eyes gave you away? After all it is said that "the eyes are the mirror of the soul".

The way we use our eyes is also a way of interpreting meaning. Who will be viewed as more confident?

(a) a public speaker who does not look at her audience, or

(b) a public speaker who looks up during her speech?

""

I am sure you answered (b). Sometimes if someone is not being truthful they cannot look you in the eye. Can you think of other instances when people do not maintain eye contact?

""

Perhaps you are aware that in some African cultures, it is respectful to drop your head when having a conversation with a superior. Or think of someone who is distracted or bored. They will find it very difficult to maintain eye contact if they are not concentrating on what you is saying or the presentation at hand. Share any additional ideas regarding eye contact with your fellow learners.

Use of space

People convey messages about themselves by using space. Consider for example a new student who decides to sit either in the back or front of the class, or a staff member who sits far from the head of a table or at the head of a table during a meeting.

Most teachers will tell you that the mischief-makers mostly sit at the back of the class and the more serious students choose a position near the front.

Use of touch

Touch can also communicate the nature of the relationship between people.

> **EXAMPLE**
> Lovers will touch each other more frequently than friends. You could pat someone on the back to calm them down. Can you think of other examples?

Touching behaviour is different for people of different cultures, and we also need to be very aware of what makes other people uncomfortable and what is inappropriate. Also find out what touching behaviour could be understood as sexual harassment.

Use of time

People can use other people's use of time to interpret messages. If someone phoned you at 03:00, you would probably expect it to be bad news. Similarly if you do not return a client's call within a time frame that he thinks is appropriate, he may interpret your non-verbal behaviour as an indication that you do not care about his business. Time is often a reflection of status, the higher your status, the more control you have over time. For example, the executives in your organisation will control how long you will wait for an appointment. Different cultures and personality types view time differently, often resulting in misunderstanding. Organisations therefore need to have company standards for time keeping that everyone adheres to.
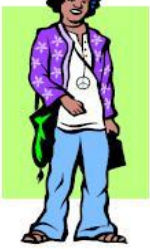
Personal appearance

Personal appearance includes the way you look, including but not limited to:

- the clothes you wear
- your personal grooming
- the symbols you wear (badges, tattoos, etc.)

Your sense of style, etc. and can influence first impressions, job interviews, consumer buying behaviour and even courtroom decisions. Your personal appearance can give away clues about your age gender, identity, personality, attitudes, social standing, and income, to name but a few.

A job seeker looking for a position as a professional in a leading investments company who arrives for an interview wearing jeans and "tekkies", will probably not get the job, even if he has all the right qualifications and experience because the interviewer may interpret that the candidate is not professional.

What do the appearances of the people below communicate to you?

Age: Culture: Social Standing: Income:	Age: Culture: Social Standing: Income:	Age: Culture: Social Standing: Income:	Age: Culture: Social Standing: Income:

"One's perception is one's reality"

The above saying means that even if someone else's perception of you is incorrect or unfair, it is real to the person who perceives it. Our role is to manage other people's perceptions of ourselves. We can do this by taking care of our physical appearance, without compromising our unique individuality.

Vocal qualities

In South Africa we have a variety of accents and ways in which people speak.

This adds to the diversity of our nation and we do not want to make everyone a clone of the other. Only when our vocal qualities lead to miscommunication, do we need to work on refining it.

We need to use or vocal qualities to enhance the meaning of our message.

Therefore we change our vocal qualities according to our situation:

Volume

Some people speak softer or louder than others. We can increase or decrease the volume of our speech to change our meaning. For example:.

- A client will use a louder voice to shout out his dissatisfaction at having his call transferred for a third time.

- A soft voice would be used to show sympathy towards a client who has called in to enquire about benefits after her spouse has passed away.

- You have to speak louder when you are interacting with a client if the air conditioning unit is faulty and making a noise.

- Speaking too loudly in inappropriate situations can be irritating, and interfere with meaning. Speaking too softly can make it difficult for listeners to hear and understand you.

Inflection

Inflection is the rise and fall of the voice. People who do not use inflection in their voices have a monotonous "drone". However, overusing inflection can create childlike ("singing") speech. You would typically use more inflection when you are talking about something exciting.

Pitch

When interpreting emotions from the highness or lowness of the voice, we can typically infer (conclude) a range of emotions from calmness, cosines, lack of interest through to depression from a low-pitched voice. A high pitch can indicate extreme emotions such as fear or excitement.

Resonance

This is the quality and fullness of your voice, or how pleasant or unpleasant your voice sounds to the listener.

Rate

Rate refers to the pace of your speech. Speaking quickly usually indicates excitement, anger, volatility, whilst a slower speech would indicate being relaxed, trying to make a point, depression, lack of interest, etc.

Note: Speaking too quickly can cause your listeners not to hear all your words, and speaking too slowly can be monotonous and boring for your listeners.

Clarity

Clarity refers to the clearness of your pronunciation. Your accent is acceptable, but only if the listener can understand what you are saying.

A final note on vocal qualities (characteristics): For some of these vocal qualities the emotions indicated are very opposite for the same vocal characteristic.

EXAMPLE

How do you differentiate if the speaker is calm or depressed, when the pitch of their voice is low? Answer: You need to look at the whole situation. You would need to observe the body language that accompanies the vocal message and the words that are being sent.

Class Activity 8: Ensure that communication promotes development

Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

4.7 Use appropriate behaviour and conflict management

Most psychology books suggest that conflicts come from two sources: approach and avoidance. To approach is to have a tendency to do something or to move in a direction that will be pleasurable and satisfying. To avoid is to resist doing something, perhaps because it will not be pleasurable or satisfying.

These two categories produce three kinds of conflicts:

- Approach-Approach Conflict – this is due to the pursuit of desirable but incompatible goals.

- Approach-Avoidance Conflict – here is a desire both to do something and not to do it.

- Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict – this indicates there are two alternatives, both of which may be unpleasant.

Other causes of conflict are:

- a lack of communication
- a lack of understanding
- ambiguous (unclear) lines of authority
- conflict of interest
- disagreement on issues
- the need for agreement
- generational of differences
- religious disagreements
- diverse perspectives
- majoring in minors (this means paying too much attention to small details)
- negative environment and dysfunctional relationships

4.7.1 Language features and conventions can be manipulated

Language has certain features and conventions which can be manipulated to suit different contexts, audiences and purposes.

Conventions are the surface features of communication - the mechanics, usage, and sentence formation:

- **Mechanics** are the conventions and customs of written language, including spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, and paragraphs, which will affect the way you verbalise the content; for example, punctuation will determine how you say, "You did!" versus "You did?".

- **Usage** refers to conventions of both written and spoken language that include word order, verb tense and subject-verb agreement.

- **Sentence formation** refers to the structure of sentences, the way that phrases and clauses are used to form simple and complex sentences.

The physical nature of writing allows writers to craft and edit their sentences, combining and rearranging related ideas into a single, more compact sentence, but in oral language, words and sentences cannot be changed once they have been

spoken. This places a great responsibility on the speaker to choose words carefully and plan verbal communications carefully.

Following conventions are a courtesy to the audience; it makes your writing easier to read or listen to by putting it in a form that the audience member expects and is comfortable with.

To use language features and conventions effectively in oral communication, you would therefore have to use your knowledge of the mechanics, usage and sentence formation correctly in order to ensure that you are communicating in a manner that suits the context, audience and purpose of the communication.

Example:

When communicating with your boss you would use different words and tones than when you are communicating with a child.

4.7.2 Ensure that behaviour and conflict management is positive, sympathetic, constructive, supportive, respectful and in line with current legislation

To manage children's feelings, behaviour and conflicts, you should have techniques that you can rely on.

Managing children's feelings

What can you do, as an ECD practitioner, to help children learn how to recognise and deal with their feelings? Your task is to help children develop the emotional skills so that they can manage their feelings. These emotional skills won't only help them while they are children. The skills will also form the foundation of the emotional maturity they need when they are teenagers and as adults.

What is allowed and what is not?

In short: feelings are allowed; socially unacceptable behaviour is not allowed.

Feelings can be managed by listening to them with attention and patience, acknowledging them, and naming them so that the child is clear about them. By offering your acknowledgement of the feelings (for example, "It sounds like you feel really sad and jealous of Leo's new friend?") you make it possible for the child to clarify his feelings for himself. Again, don't worry about anything else at this point, like whether you agree with the child's behaviour or not. If you acknowledge the child's feelings, this makes her feel safe while she struggles to manage them.

Feelings can be given an outlet that is more appropriate than the "acting out' that the child may be doing. Provide safe expression for feelings by offering these safe ways as alternative outlets for intense feelings:

> Express anger by tearing newspapers or old telephone directories, stamping feet, punching a punch bag, running around the garden, or doing a "wood chopper" expulsion breath: clasp hands together above head, bend knees slightly with feet hip width apart, breathe in and then swing hands down between bent knees in a chopping action, breathing out fast with a loud breath, repeat a few times.

There are also other creative ways to express feelings: by using voices – singing, chanting, growling, whispering or using a nasty voice; through art activities like painting; and through stress management tools (examples follow in the next section).

Behaviour that is socially unacceptable, such as throwing toys in anger, should be limited. It is more constructive to do something with the feelings that will lead to a resolution, like expressing them safely and trying to fix relationships. Set limits for children to help them stop destructive actions and offer them an alternative outlet for the feelings. For example say, "I know you're sad, but hiding here and chewing on a book is spoiling the book and that isn't allowed. We could go to the bottom of the garden together and sit there behind the tree so that you can cry in private until you feel better. Maybe we could count the yellow butterflies when you have finished."

Stress management tools

You can build stress-releasing exercises into your ECD programme to release the build-up of unexpressed feelings and stresses. These techniques help to keep the pot from boiling over, as their regular use will keep the children calmer and better able to deal with everyday frustrations. Choose a few techniques, demonstrate them once a week and use them as part of your response to cues whenever tension is building. Do them as part of your intervention when the children are struggling with feelings. Allow at least five minutes to do one of these stress-busters:

- **Slow breathing:** Sitting cross-legged on the floor, or comfortably on a chair, take deep breaths, breathing in through the nose, out through the mouth, slowly. (This slows down the heart and has a calming effect.)

- **Guided imagery:** Get the children to lie down on their backs with eyes closed, and guide them through these images: "Let's imagine … a beautiful field of green grass where you can lie on your back and look at the soft clouds floating in the sky; feel your body relaxing into the earth, getting heavier as you let go of all the feelings"; OR "Imagine your heart glowing like a golden light with love, peace and quietness" (or similar guided imagery).

- **Massage:** Children sit in a circle for a massage, all facing left, so that they can massage each other's backs gently and slowly; they could also use this circle to do a back tickle.

- **Floppy bodies:** Stand and shake out hands, feet, shoulders, arms, legs, wiggle hips, shake head, shake out the feelings, and become all floppy.

- **Lie down** straight with feet flopping to the side and hands gently resting palms up. Begin to relax your toes; when they are all relaxed, focus your attention on your legs, imagine them relaxing completely… (and so on, progressing up to the top of the head, and end with a deep breath in, and a stretch and breathe out).

These relaxation techniques are good for facilitators too.

Helping children manage their feelings

It is important that you demonstrate a process of dealing with feelings that show that there is a beginning, a middle and an end to strong feelings.

- The first step is to check what you are modelling for the children – are you stressed, are your voice and your manner tense? You should be sharing

appropriate feelings and showing appropriate ways of working through them, for example, "I'm sad that my dog died. Today I need to be a bit quiet and remember her; maybe I'll feel a bit better tomorrow or the next day." This will help the children to cope with their own feelings in a similar way.

Here are some other techniques you can use to help children learn to deal with their feelings constructively:

- Allow all feelings: don't encourage "good feelings" or discourage "bad feelings".

- Teach "feeling" words, like "angry", "sad", "jealous", "happy", "excited", "disappointed", "lonely", to support children who are struggling with vocabulary (expressions) and with feelings. Use the issue books mentioned earlier as a starting point.
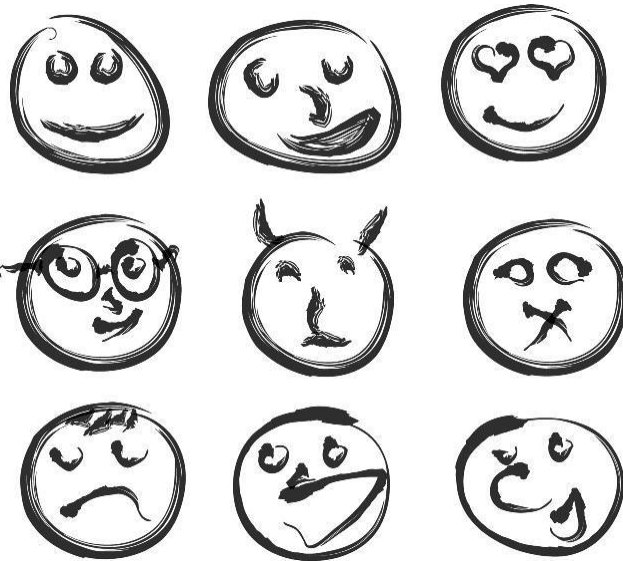
- Help children accept, express and move through their feelings to a new point of understanding.

- Remind children that feelings don't last forever, that another day will come when they will feel a bit better.

It is slow work to focus on feelings, allow their expression, deal with the process of accepting and healing, but it is best to do this work carefully as it is an investment in teaching children to manage their feelings healthily for the future.

Acknowledge the child's feelings

Make sure you acknowledge the child's feelings, thereby allowing her to express them more clearly. Try not to think about whether or not you agree with the child's behaviour at this point. Acknowledge the child's feelings by saying, "You are really angry" or "You looked sad". "That must have hurt". If you acknowledge the child's feelings, you tell the child that you care about her and support her. This will help to make her feel brave and controlled while she still struggles to manage her feelings.

Set limits to their behaviour

Redirect their feelings

There are many techniques you can use to help a child redirect his feelings. Here are a few ideas.

- Express anger by tearing newspapers, stamping feet, punching a punch bag, running around the garden.

- Express feelings by using voices – singing, chanting, growling, using a mean voice.

- Express feelings through creative art activities. Say: "That's a strong feeling. I wonder what colour it would be if you drew it. I wonder what that feeling would look like".

- Express feelings by using a stress management tool. You'll find out about these tools in the next lesson.

Managing stress

We don't always realise it, but children can suffer from stress. Often when children are unable to manage their feelings, they bottle them up inside, which cause body tension and stress. You can build stress-releasing exercises into you ECD centre's learning programme. Choose a few techniques and use them regularly. Make sure you tell the children what these techniques are called. Then when an individual child is struggling with feelings, you can give her some time out by saying, "Phindi, take some deep breaths"' or "You look frustrated - take a break and do the body shake".

Stress management techniques:

- deep breaths

- let's imagine

- the massage train

- the back tickle

- the body shake

- relax your toes, relax your nose

Deep breaths

Tell the children to breathe slowly and rhythmically in through the nose and out through the mouth. It is helpful to some children if they close their eyes and keep one hand resting on their heart area, monitoring their heartbeat, while they take deep breaths. This exercise can slow down the heart rate and help the children feel more relaxed.

Let's imagine

Tell the children to close their eyes. Then say, "Imagine you are at a beautiful beach. The sun is shining overhead. Your body feels warm and happy". Or say, "Remember a time that you felt really happy. Try to make a picture in your head of that time. Why are you feeling happy? What does the happy feeling feel like in your body? 'Give them enough time to create the mind picture in each step.

The message train

Get the children to sit in a long queue. Then ask each child to place his/her hand s on the shoulders of the child in front of her. Tell the children to gently rub and pat each other's shoulder (you can massage the child at the end of the queue). After a minute, ask them to turn around and massage the child who massaged their shoulders before.

The back tickle

Tell the children to find partners. Then let them take turns to gently stroke each other's backs.

The body shake

Tell the children jump up and down and wiggle their arms, legs and bodies to shake out any physical tensions.

Relax your toes. Relax your nose.

Let the children lie down and close their eyes. Guide them to relax different parts of their bodies, starting with toes, working up slowly through the body. Say, "Wiggle your toes. Let them relax.., wiggle your feet…, now let them relax.., move your ankles from side to side.., then let them relax..' and so on, ending with the nose.

Helping children manage their feelings

Here are some other techniques you can use to help children learn to deal with their feelings in a healthy and constructive ways.

- Teach feelings words.
- Teach children to describe their feelings.
- Don't encourage "good feelings" or discourage "bad feelings".
- Help children process their feelings.
- Remind children that feelings don't last forever.
- Be a role model.

Teaching feeling words

Young children have limited language and communication skills. They are still learning to use words to express their thoughts and feelings. Even for adults, it can be difficult to find words to express strong feelings. You can help children develop a "feeling vocabulary" by using words that express feelings. Some examples are "happy, sad, ashamed, shy, angry or hurt".

Teach children to describe their feelings.

Sometimes children cannot find the words to describe their feelings. Their feelings may not fit neatly under the labels "happy" or "angry". You can help children to name their feelings, by asking them to describe exactly what they are feeling inside their bodies. Young children can be very descriptive. They may say things like, "I feel like I want to hide under a rock where no one can see me", or "If I can't fit the pieces together this time, I am going to explode".

Don't encourage good feelings or discourage bad feelings

As adults we often label some feelings good feelings and other feelings as bad feelings. Examples of good feelings are feeling happy, or excited. Examples of bad

feelings are feeling angry, or sad. However, it is not bad to feel angry or sad. In fact, it is healthy to express your feelings, whatever they are. It's not okay to express our difficult feelings in ways that harm people or property.

This is true for children and adults. But if we express our feelings in healthy ways (through talking, drawing, stamping feet and so on), this is good for our mental health. So, as an ECD practitioner, you need to let children know that we all have difficult feelings sometimes. We need to express all our feelings, even the difficult ones. But we need to do so in ways that are healthy.

Help children process their feelings

When you encourage young children to describe their feelings, you also help them to express their feelings fully, and move beyond those feelings. It takes practice and patience to work with children in this way, but it is the best way to help children learn to manage their feelings successfully.

A conversation between an ECD practitioner and a child with a strong feeling:

ECD Practitioner	Child
I can see a small person with a big feeling. I wonder what that feeling is.	a) I don't know.
You don't know. What does it feel like inside your body?	b) I feel like my heart is broken into a thousand pieces.
Your heart feels completely broken up. That must feel bad.	c) It does, it feels like I will never be happy again. It feels like I will never have a friend again.
It sounds like your feelings really got hurt.	d) They did get hurt. I thought Adam was my friend but now he's playing with Thami.
You want Adam to play with you; your feelings get hurt when he plays with Thami.	e) Yes! Although sometimes I play with Solly. So maybe it's okay to have more than one friend.
Children can have more than one friend.	f) Sure they can. But they can only have one or two special friends. Adam is playing with Thami now, but I'm still his special friend.
You and Adam are still special friends.	g) I think so. We've been friends since we were two. Next week I'm going to Adam's birthday party.

Reading through this conversation, you will realise that the ECD practitioner is helping the child to describe and talk about his feelings and finding his own way of coping, to also come up with strategies and solutions.

Remind children that feelings don't last forever

Children need to know that feelings don't last forever and that feelings do change. They also need to know that often people will feel differently about the same thing and that it is okay.

Be a role model

How do you manage your own feelings? Think about it. Do you have strategies that help you to express your difficult feelings in a healthy way? This is important, because children will learn from you how to manage their feelings. You are a role model for the children. Make sure that you stay in touch with your feelings, and that you have healthy ways of coping with stress, frustration, anger and irritation. This will help the children to learn and apply these coping skills in their own lives.

4.7.3 Manage discussions and/or conflicts sensitively

It is important to manage discussions and/or conflicts sensitively and in a manner that supports the goal of group interaction or one-on-one interaction, because there might be various group issues that should be worked through and managed, e.g.:

- disagreements in groups
- personality clashes
- conflict management
- resolving deadlocks
- positively summarising conclusions

As with leadership styles, different writers present models of conflict management styles. There is not one best conflict handling style, but rather a best style for a given situation. We consider a few models and styles and indicate when each style is most appropriate:

Model 1. Here we can distinguish between five styles

1. **The Problem Solver** – refuses to deny or flee the conflict, presses for conversation and negotiation of the conflict until a satisfactory conclusion is reached. Most effective with groups that share common goals and whose conflict stems from miscommunication.

2. **The Super Helper** – they constantly work to help others and give little thought to self. This is the "Messiah" who is often passive in their own conflicts but always assists others to solve their conflicts. This style is to be avoided as one must deal with personal conflicts to be able to effectively help others.

3. **The Power Broker** – for this person, solutions are more important than relationships. Even if a person leaves the group, as long as a solution was achieved, they are satisfied. It can be used when substantive differences are so conflicting that mutually inclusive goals are not possible.

4. **The Facilitator** – they adapt to a variety of situations and styles in order to achieve a compromise between competing factions. It is effective for conflicts where differences are based on attitudes or emotions.

5. **The Fearful Loser** – this person runs from conflict probably because they are personally insecure. This tends to produce hostility and result in a weakening of leadership in the group.

Model 2. Speed Leas in "Discover Your Conflict Management Style" mentions six styles

1. **Persuading** – trying to change another's point of view, way of thinking, feelings or ideas. Techniques used include: rational approaches; deductive and inductive arguments; and other verbal means. Persuade when there is great trust; when one party is admired; when goals are compatible; and when one party does not have strong opinions on the subject.

2. **Compelling – the use of physical or emotional force, authority or pressure to oblige** or constrain someone to act in a desired way. Use compelling infrequently; when you are threatened or under attack; when rights are being violated; when you have authority to demand compliance; when there is inadequate time to work through differences; and when all other means have failed.
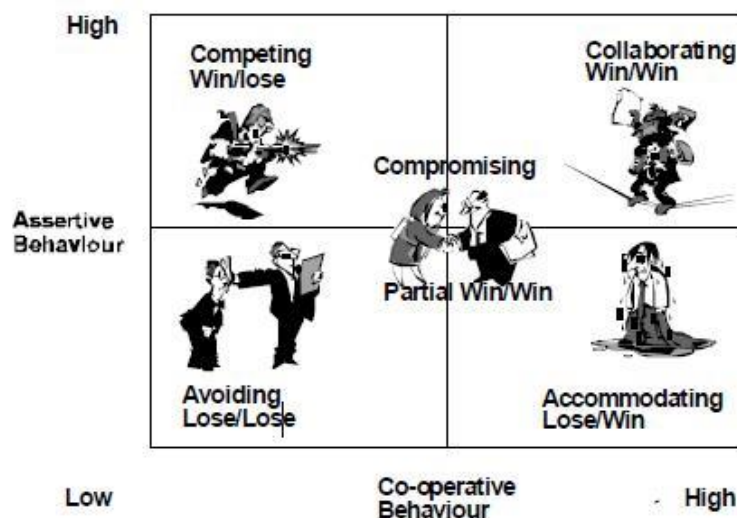
3. **Avoiding – This is actually a category that combines four styles:** avoidance (to evade or stay away from conflict); ignoring (act as if the conflict is not going on); fleeing (actively remove oneself from the arena in which conflict might take place); and accommodation (going along with an opposition to keep the relationship). Strategies include: procrastination (postponing unnecessarily); saying "yes" to requests but then not acting on them; showing concern for the other without responding to the problem; resigning; and studying the problem with no intention of doing anything about it. Avoid this style when people are fragile or insecure; when they need space to cool down; when there is conflict on many fronts simultaneously; when differences are trivial (small); when parties are unable to reconcile differences; and when the relationship is unimportant.

4. **Collaborating** – This is a process of co-labouring with others to resolve difficulties that are being experienced. It is also called joint or mutual problem solving. Collaborate when people are willing to play by collaboration rules; when there is ample time for discussion; when the issue lends itself to collaboration; where resources are limited and negotiation would be better; and when conflict and trust levels are not too high.

5. **Negotiating** – Also called bargaining, this involves collaborating with lower expectations. It is a process where both sides try to get as much as they can, realising there must be give and take. Where collaboration is a "win/win" strategy, negotiation is a "sorta-win/sorta-lose" strategy. Negotiate when there is something that can be divided or traded; when compelling (forcing) is not acceptable and collaboration has been tried and failed; when all parties are

willing to negotiate; when the different parties have equal power; and when trust is high.

6. **Supporting** – Here one person will provide a support to the person who is experiencing conflict. It involves strengthening, encouraging or empowering one party so they can handle their difficulties. It involves support when the problem is the responsibility of someone else; when a party brings problems outside of your relationship with them; and when one party in the conflict is unwilling to deal with issues.

Model 3. Tension between relationships and goals

A third model focuses on the tension between relationships and goals in conflict handling. When a leader becomes involved in a conflict there are two major concerns to deal with:

(a1) Achieving personal goals and (b2) preserving the relationship.
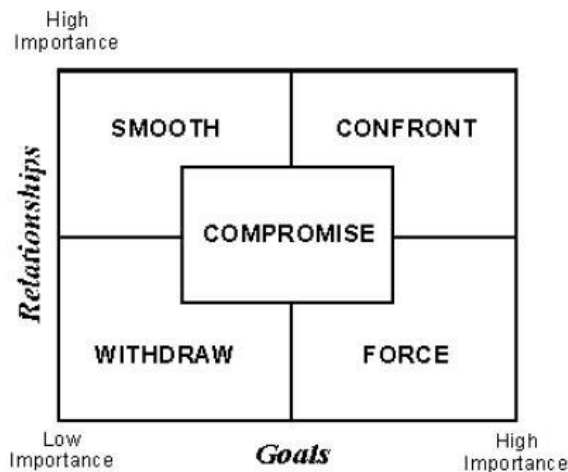
The importance of goals and relationships affect how leaders act in a conflict situation. The following five styles of managing conflict are found:

1. **Withdrawing** – people with this style tend to withdraw in order to avoid conflicts. They give up their personal goals and relationships; stay away from the issues over which the conflict is taking place and from the people they are in conflict with; and believe it is hopeless to try to resolve conflicts. They believe it is easier to withdraw (physically and psychologically) from a conflict than to face it.

2. **Forcing** – people in this category try to overpower opponents by forcing them to accept their solution to the conflict. Their goals are highly important but the relationship is of minor importance. They seek to achieve their goals at all costs; are not concerned with the needs of other people and do not care if other people like or accept them. They assume that one person winning and the other losing settle conflicts. While winning gives them a sense of pride and achievement, losing gives them a sense of weakness, inadequacy, and failure. They try to win by attacking, overpowering, overwhelming, and intimidating other people.

3. **Smoothing** – for those who fall into this category, the relationship is of great importance, while their own goals are of little importance. They want to be accepted and liked by other people; they think that conflict should be avoided in favour of harmony and believe that conflicts cannot be discussed without damaging relationships. They are afraid that if the conflict continues, someone

will get hurt and that would ruin the relationship. They give up their goals to preserve the relationship. They try to smooth over the conflict in fear of harming the relationship.

4. **Compromising** – people with this style are moderately concerned with their own goals and about their relationships with other people. They seek a compromise. They give up some of their goals and persuade the other person in a conflict to give up some of their goals. They seek a solution to conflicts where both sides gain something.

5. **Confronting** – people in this category highly value their own goals and relationships. They view conflicts as problems to be solved and seek a solution that achieves both their own goals and the goals of the other person in the conflict. They believe conflict improves relationships by reducing tension between people. By seeking solutions that satisfy both themselves and the other person they maintain the relationship. They are not satisfied until a solution is found that achieves their own goals and the other person's goals and they want all tensions and negative

Supporting the goal of the group or one-on-one interaction

Within conflict management there is the danger that the group think may be flawed and negotiating your way around changing this can be challenging. To reach consensus (agreement) to support a more balanced or negotiated outcome it is important to know what kind of group think could have a negative influence:

- The group overestimates its power.
- The group becomes close-minded.
- Group members experience pressure to conform.

Here are some principles for leaders to prevent group think and promote cohesiveness (interconnectedness) :

- Establish a norm of critical evaluation.
- Leaders should not state their preferences at the beginning of the group's decision-making process.
- Make sure that the group does not get insulated.

Cohesiveness come about when people are supporting group goals and within a one-on-one interaction.

Here is a list of four things that can be done or worked on within a more established group to make to create better cohesiveness:

1. Heighten the awareness of the values of membership. Stress the positive features of the group by speaking of the benefits the group offers. Therefore they will see the group as more attractive to them.
2. The group needs to appeal to satisfy everyone needs. One on One interaction to bring this home would be advised. Remember fulfilling individuals needs is a big factor that contributes to the level of cohesiveness in a group.
3. Enhancing of the group's status will also help increase a sense of cohesiveness. This helps to make each member feel they have a higher status by being in the group. Therefore each member knows they have an esteemed place within the group.
4. An increase in group interactions helps to increase togetherness.

4.7.4 Put forward own position when confronted by opposing views

Parties should be asked to describe recent disagreements. What were the issues, who were involved and how was the conflict handled? What are the differences between conflicts that were handled effectively and those that were not? Can you see the different conflict styles evolving? If the parties can provide answers to questions like these they will be ready to work on clarifying goals, reconciling differences, and finding ways to resolve conflicts.

Clarify goals

Even when people are in conflict they usually share many of the same goals in spite of their differences. Both sides usually want to see the conflict resolved in a way that will be mutually agreeable, beneficial to both, and inclined to enhance the relationship so that future communication will improve. The youth leader should try to discourage bargaining over positions and work from the basis of the common goals that people are striving for. People should first be reminded of the goals that they share, and then they should discuss their differences.

Reconcile differences

The guidelines for reconciling differences are:

Step 1: Take the initiative and go to the person who has wronged you

This should be done in person and in private. In making this move, it is best if the person goes with a spirit of humility, with a willingness to listen, with a determination to be non-defensive and to forgive.

Step 2: Take witnesses along

If the person will not listen or change, a return visit with one or two witnesses becomes necessary. These people are to listen, evaluate, determine facts and try to arbitrate (settle) and bring a resolution to the dispute.

Resolve conflicts

When individuals or groups are in conflict, they have four main choices about the direction they will take. They may avoid conflict, maintain, escalate, or reduce it.

Sometimes people do not want conflict resolution and may decide to go in different directions.

Conflict resolution means that the youth (ECD centre) leader will be involved in negotiation and mediation. It is not always wise for leaders to get involved in someone else's conflict even when they are asked to do so, as they will feel pressurised to take sides; be required to make quick analytical decisions; and be responsible for keeping communication open.

When youth leaders do choose to get involved they should try to show respect for both parties; understand both positions without taking sides; reassure people and give them hope; encourage open communication and mutual listening; focus on things that can be changed; try to keep the conflict from escalating; summarise the situation and positions frequently; and help the parties find additional help if the mediation is not effective.

We propose that you use the following four-step method in conflict resolution:

Step 1: Separate the people from the problem

This means treating one another with respect, avoiding defensive statements, or character judgments, and giving attention instead to the issues. Each side should be encouraged and helped to understand the other's fears, perceptions, insecurities and desires. Parties should think of themselves as partners in a side-by-side search for a fair agreement, which is advantageous to each side.

Step 2: Focus on the issues, not the positions

When people identify the real issues and stop trying to defend rigid (inflexible) positions they are on their way to resolve their conflict.

Step 3: Think of various options that might solve the problem

In the beginning there is no attempt to evaluate the options or to arrive at a single solution. Each side makes suggestions for options in a brainstorming session. After a number of creative and perhaps new alternatives have been proposed, each option can be evaluated.

Step 4: Insist on objective criteria

Conflict is less likely to occur if both sides agree beforehand on an objective way to reach a solution. If both sides agree to abide by the results of a coin toss, a judge's ruling, or an appraiser's evaluation, the end results may not be equally satisfying to both parties but everybody agrees on the solution because it was determined by objective, fair and mutually accepted methods.

4.7.5 Use and adapt approach or style appropriate to interaction context

The most important information that is exchanged during conflicts and arguments is often communicated nonverbally. The style that you communicate in is important. Nonverbal communication includes eye contact, facial expression, and tone of voice, posture, touch, and gestures.

When you are in a conflict situation, you must pay close attention to the other person's nonverbal cues; this will give you clues on what the other person is really saying, respond in a way that builds trust, and get to the root of the problem. Simple nonverbal signals such as a calm tone of voice, a reassuring touch, or a concerned facial expression can go a long way toward defusing a heated exchange.

Your listening skills will be tested too, as language that has conflict undertones must be managed. When aggressive language is used, it is pointless to become engaged with the poor behaviour. Here are some tips to manage this.

Do the following:

- Keep your voice calm and even.
- Keep your facial expression as neutral as possible to avoid showing emotion.
- Ensure eye contact to show you are paying attention.

- Make sure the person has enough physical space.
- Take a few seconds to calm yourself down before interacting.

	Class Activity 9: Use appropriate behaviour and conflict management Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.