

Module 9C: Counseling and Follow-up

Session 3 : Counsel the mother on feeding

Day :

Time Required : 1 hour 30 minutes

Objectives

At the end of the session ASHAs will be able to:

1. Demonstrate good communication skills when asking questions to assess feeding, when identifying feeding problems, and when giving advice to mothers and caretakers on improving feeding practices
2. Counsel a mother effectively for feeding a child with diarrhoea

Materials and Preparation

See Checklist of Instructional Materials at beginning of sick child module. These materials will be used for sick child module.

Training Activities :

Activity - 1 : Participants read 'Give Feeding Advice'

Activity - 2 : Demonstration Role Play - Giving Feeding Advice using Good Communication Skills

This demonstration role play gives participants a model of the entire process of **feeding assessment**, identification of feeding problems and counseling:

To practice counseling steps and communication skills in the following:

- asking questions to assess feeding;
- identifying correct feeding practices and the important feeding problems;
- praising the mother, whenever appropriate;
- advising the mother using simple language and giving only relevant advice about feeding.
- checking the mother's understanding of correct feeding practices.

Description for the MOTHER

- This is a **scripted role play** about Ashish, an 8-month-old child who has lost his appetite during illness.
- Read your role (Ashish's mother) carefully from the script.

Description for the ASHA

- The Trainer should play the role of the ASHA.
- Read the script carefully.
- Have the relevant chart ready for use. A baby doll will be helpful as a prop.

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- For the participants not playing the roles write the following communication skills on the flip chart (or blackboard) before role play begins:
 - Ask, listen
 - Praise
 - Advise
 - Check understanding

To the left of the script, the communication skills being used are listed in italics. The co-Trainer should stand near the flipchart or blackboard during the role play. Point to each skill as it is used in the script. This will make participants aware of the skills being used.

Perform the role play and hold a discussion afterwards.

SCRIPT FOR DEMONSTRATION ROLE PLAY

ASHA : Let's talk about feeding Ashish. Do you breast feed him?
Ask, listen

Mother : Yes, I'm still breast feeding him.

ASHA : That's very good. Breastmilk is still the best milk for Ashish.
Praise
Ask, listen

Mother : It varies. Maybe 4 or 5 times.

ASHA : Do you also breast feed at night?
Ask, listen

Mother : Yes, if he wakes up and wants it.

ASHA : Good. Keep breast feeding as often as he wants.
Praise
Ask, listen

Mother : Sometimes I give him cooked porridge, or banana mixed in curds.

ASHA : Those are good choices. Who feeds the child & How often are these food given?
Praise
Ask, listen

Mother : I feed Ashish myself whenever he appears to be hungry.

ASHA : That is very good . Now tell me what is the amount you give and how many times a day?
Ask, listen

Mother : Usually ½ -1 *coterie*¹ about 2 times a day.

ASHA : Do you ever give Ashish a feeding bottle?
Ask, listen

¹: A coterie in Hindi means a cup.

Mother : No, I don't have one.

ASHA : Good. It is much better to use a spoon or cup.
Praise
Ask, listen Tell me, during this illness, has Ashish's feeding changed?

Mother : He still breast feeds, but he has not been hungry for porridge or curds.

ASHA : Well, he's probably just lost his appetite due to the fever.
Advise
Ask, listen Most children do. Still, keep encouraging him to eat. Try giving him his favourite nutritious foods. Give him small servings but frequently. Have there been any other problems with feeding?

Mother : No, I don't think so.

ASHA : You said you were feeding Ashish porridge 2 times a day.
Advise At his age, he is ready to eat foods like cereal about 3 times every day. Make sure the cereal is thick. Ashish is ready for some different foods too. Try adding some mashed vegetables or beans to the cereal, or some very small bits of meat or fish. Also add a little bit of oil for energy. Would this be possible for you to do?

Mother : Yes, I think so.

ASHA : Let me show you on this chart what Ashish needs. Since he's 8 months old, he should get the foods in the proper amount around 1 *catorie* a day. Have a look at this picture. (*Mention some local foods.*)
Advise

Mother : Should I give him these foods now, while he is sick?

ASHA : Sure, try offering them. He might like the taste, and if he will eat them, these are the best foods. Give him the food that he likes.
Advise And most importantly, continue with breast feeding.

Mother : All right. I will try adding some more things to the cereal.

ASHA : Good. What do you have that you will add?
Check
Understand

Mother : I will add a little oil, and some mashed peas. Sometimes I can add vegetables or egg, whenever they are available in my house.

ASHA : Good. And how often will you try to feed Ashish these foods?
Check
Understand

Mother : Three times each day.

ASHA : That's right. I am sure you will feed him well.
Praise

Discussion of Role Play :

- Ask participants to tell you what feeding problems were found.

Answer : Feeding problems include:

- Ashish not feeding well during illness.
 - Needs more variety in his complementary foods.
 - Needs an additional serving every day.
- Was all of the relevant advice about feeding given? Identify the key specific advice.

Summarize the Role Play

- Sick children often have poor appetite. They should hence be given their favourite foods, in small amounts, and frequently.
- Adding oil and sugar to food helps to increase their strength. Children can get more energy from these foods even if they consume small amounts.
- Increase frequency and duration of breast feeding during illness.
- Discuss with the mother roughly the amounts that she would agree to give every time she gives food.

Activity - 3 : Role Play - Giving Feeding Advice for a Child suffering from Diarrhoea, using Good Communication Skills

- The purpose of this role play is to practice using good communication techniques while giving feeding advice regarding a child suffering from diarrhoea.
- Identify a participant to play the ASHA's role, and another to play the mother's role.

Role Play - Description for the Mother

You are the mother of Java, a 15-month-old boy who is very low weight-for-age and has diarrhoea. The ASHA has explained how to give extra fluid to treat diarrhoea at home (ORS, water, and food-based fluids such as: butter milk, dal). Now the ASHA is going to ask you some questions and advise you about feeding Java.

You are worried about Java, but you have little food available in your home, and you have three other children to feed. You are afraid while talking to the ASHA, and you are hesitant to ask questions and even you are confused. You tend to answer the ASHA very briefly so that he or she is compelled to ask further questions to get the necessary information.

Java is no longer breast fed. He is given goat's milk and shares the food eaten by the rest of the family, 2 or 3 times each day. He has continued to eat everything that he is offered during the diarrhoea. If the ASHA asks what foods are given, describe low energy foods common in your area. If asked who feeds the child and how, tell her that sometimes you feed, and sometimes your eldest child feeds Java. Java is given food from the same plate as for other children. Describe feeding practices common in your area.

Role Play - Description for the ASHA

- Review the feeding questions and feeding recommendations for Java's age (12 months to 2 years age in the food box).
- Encourage the mother to give nutritious complementary food or family foods 5 times a day to Java, since he is not breast fed any more.
- Advise the mother how to make food for Java energy dense. Also suggest to her to increase the variety and quantity of foods.
- Make sure that Java is given adequate servings of food and is actively fed.
- Negotiate with her on types of locally available foods which she can give to Java.
- You should only recommend foods which the mother can afford to prepare, since she is poor and has very few food items at home.

Give a copy of the description to both the persons performing the role play.

Participants not playing the roles should observe and note:

- Has ASHA asked all the questions on feeding? Note down any question that may have been missed out?
- Were feeding problems identified? Record any feeding problems missed out?
- Did the ASHA praise the mother on any good practice?
- Did the feeding advice relate to family's economic status? In what way?
- How did the ASHA encourage the mother to ask questions for clarification?
- Did the ASHA ASK any checking questions? Write one checking question.

Use of the Case Management Chart

The ASHA first marks the answers to all feeding questions by circles and by writing appropriate information - Java who is 15 months old gets goat's milk, he shares family food with other children 2-3 times/day. An elder sibling feeds Java. The foods are thin. This feeding practice is matched with the recommendations given in the second box from right '12 months to 2 years age'. Next, she marks the good feeding practices and feeding problems.

The Trainer should monitor the correct use of the Case Management Chart.

Summarize the Role Play

- Ask questions on feeding and identify feeding problems before advising the mother.

Good Feeding Practices	Feeding Problems
➤ Feeding continued during illness.	➤ Shares food with other children. ➤ Elder sister feeds Java. ➤ Feeds 2-3 times/day.

- Feeding advice should be adjusted according to the foods available at home and what the mother is able to prepare and give to the child.
- Negotiate for only about 2 changes. More than this may confuse the mother.

- Feeding problems and possible solutions should be summarized.

Feeding Problems	Possible Solutions
➤ Shares food with other children.	➤ Child's food should be separate.
➤ Elder sister feeds the child sometimes.	➤ Preferably, Mother should feed the child. If this is not possible, somebody more responsible must feed the child.
➤ Feeds 2-3 times/day.	➤ Increase the frequency to 5 times/day.

- The ASHA should encourage the reluctant and shy Mother to talk.

Summary

- Ask a participant to name the key communication techniques when talking to mothers (Answer: *Ask, Listen, Praise, Advise, Check understanding*)
- Ask a participant to give the key points on counseling a mother when she is feeding a child with diarrhoea (Answer: *continued feeding, increased intake of food, ORS or water and food-based fluids, more frequent meals and snacks*)

Evaluation of the session

Objectives	Assessment Method
Demonstrate good communication skills when assessing and counseling for feeding problems	Discussion after role play
Counsel a mother effectively for feeding a child with diarrhoea	Discussion after role play