

MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



COMMUNITY PROGRAMME - REPORT

II MSc. COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

21ST NOVEMBER 2022



HOPE

GROUP 3

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INTRODUCTION:

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”

-Desmond tutu.

The facilitators who belong to the department of M Sc. Counselling psychology and positive psychology elective conducted a training module on the topic **hope** on 21st November,2022 at pattinapakkam community hall. The community visit was organised by the police department of pattinapakkam , the inner wheel club of Chennai gemini and the department of MSc. Counselling psychology of Madras School of Social Work (MSSW). The facilitators were accompanied by Dr. Vyjayanthi mala, assistant professor of the department of Msc Counselling Psychology, MSSW. The module which was initially designed for the population of middle-aged people of the fisherman community of pattinapakkam, due to some changes, was conducted on the children of the same community who participated in the training module. The activities planned for the adult population were altered such that they were suitable for the children population. There were about 12 participants in the group, the participants were under the age of 12.

The instructions were given to the participants in their comfortable language and for each activity, the instructions were given at the beginning of the activity. The facilitators conducted

3 activities including the group activity which includes even participants of the other group as well. A good rapport was established with the participants through the activities.

GROUP ICEBREAKER: FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN- RUN, RUN, RUN children were asked to gather together and form a circle. The participants were asked to link hands with the facilitators being included in the circle.

The facilitators introduced themselves and interacted with the children in their vicinity. The kids were mostly open and energetic, and it was fairly easy to build rapport with them. The facilitators then began explaining the icebreaker game.

The game had the following steps and rules:

1. The facilitators play music and the participants were asked to walk as a group as long as the music plays.
2. The facilitators then stop the music and call out a number.
3. The participants must form subgroups with the number of participants as mentioned by the facilitator.
4. This is repeated for several rounds.
5. Then, the facilitators ask the final subgroup to find three similarities amongst all of the members.
6. The participants are then asked to return back to the circle.
7. Each team shares the similarities they found.
8. The facilitators appreciate the participants and encourage further interactions.
9. In this way, all the members are made more familiar with each other, and the group becomes more interactive and comfortable.
10. Finally, the subgroups are divided for the group activities by the three teams by

following the above steps.

It could be seen that the children were very enthusiastic and interactive. They mingled with the facilitators as well as with each other easily. They were very interested in playing games and listening to music and running around and having fun. The similarities they came up with included pizza and burgers, art, sports, watching movies, listening to cinema songs

The families gathered at the venue mostly consisted of women and children. The children were around 30 in number and the majority were under the age of 12 (approximately). The

etc. They were very engaged and earnest in their participation. The facilitators were thus able to establish rapport with relative ease.

It was a very interesting learning experience for the facilitators since it provided a practical example of how interventions are conducted, how rapport must be built, importance of engaging the participants, importance of being flexible, spontaneous and adaptable as trainers and facilitators, importance of modifying activities and interventions based on the maturity and motivation levels of the participants, etc. The facilitators were able to observe how vital a positive first impression and positive initial interactions were for the success of the program. The experience proved to be fun and full of learning for the facilitators as well. The goal of the module and the activities is to help the participants understand the concept of hope in a meaningful and simple way.

IN - GROUP ICEBREAKER - MY GESTURES DESCRIBE ME

As the saying goes, first impressions are always the best. Presenting oneself to the team and overcoming all of our fears increases one's confidence. Prior to beginning team development, it is essential to make a personal introduction to the group. Since the group includes a range of kids from various age groups, the activity is set up so that members can introduce themselves to the group. To make this activity more engaging, let's label it "my gestures describe me."

We as facilitators made the group of 12 children stand in a closed circle, we also joined the group to provide an experience learning environment. The instruction was provided to the children which were as follows: the first person begins the activity by introducing their name

with a gesture, and the second person must replicate the first person's activity before introducing themselves with the gesture. Every member of the circle must finish their turn. The fact that the entire group would be imitating their gesture enables the kids to introduce themselves without any hesitation. It gives the kids a place to get to know one another well.



ACTIVITY- 1 : ROSE, THORN, BUD

Once the participants were introduced to each other and to the group, in order to orient them with the specific topic of “hope”, an activity called, “Rose, Thorn, Bud” was conducted. The activity was conducted in the following ways:

- ❖ The children were asked to first vocalise any positive event that happened to them in the past week.
- ❖ Once everyone had shared their experience, they were asked to share a negative event or an experience they disliked during the week.
- ❖ Then, they were asked to ponder more on ways in which they can modify their negative/disliking experience into a pleasurable one.

The facilitators were able to build better communication and understanding in the children about the activity by being an ingroup participant. Their openness to share their experiences helped the children open up about themselves, which also created more self understanding in them.

The children had different perspectives which were identified with their answers such as studying, playing, going out with friends as a pleasurable activity. For the negative experience, most of them mentioned that they viewed going to school as a negative experience. They had difficulty understanding how to change their negative to a positive event. Their rapport with the facilitators, self examples given by the facilitators acted as precedents for the children to also think about their experiences on a deeper level. The children were able to analyse ways which they discovered were small changes in behaviour or thinking that helped change their negative experiences to a positive one. This activity also gave them a clear understanding of hope as the children related their want to change the negative to positive experience as their hope to have more pleasurable experiences in life. The students started to view their “thorn” experiences as opportunities to learn about

patiently waiting and modifying one's thought, feeling, behaviour in hopes that they have pleasurable outcomes at the end of it. The "rosy" experiences excited and created enthusiasm in the children which was visually observed through their non verbal cues as well as helped them hope and yearn for more fun activities and experiences.

This activity also impacted the facilitators in a personal and professional way. The facilitators were able to personally experience the joy that minute things bring in life. They were reminded of finding happiness and joy in small things similar to that of the children. The bond created between the facilitators and the children helped in both the parties being vulnerable and comfortable. The children created a hope of positive experiences for the facilitators through their conversations.

On a professional level, the facilitators were also able to practise their skills of rapport building, active listening, questioning, minimal encouragement, leading as well as interpretation and structuring skills in order to help the participants focus on activity related answers. The facilitators were also able to learn about the involvement of the trainers in in-group activities easing any difficulties faced by participants. They were able to be flexible and spontaneously modify a few questions in a way which was easier to be understood by the participants, given their age, maturity and comprehensive abilities. A clear understanding on how to construct, conduct and reflect upon a topic-oriented activity, was gained by the facilitators. The facilitators were able to gain major understanding about the fisherman community and the psychosocial environment that the children reside in.

The objectives mentioned in the training module on engaging participants in reflective thinking, learning about each other's perspectives, acknowledging the challenges faced by them, creating facilitator awareness on positive experiences and future expectations of the participants and their community as well as about themselves were fulfilled through the activity.

DEBRIEFING

After the session the children were explained the concept of hope and the purpose of the activities done during the session. It was made sure that all the children were comfortable after the session. They were asked about their experience of the session, their learnings and how they felt in general during the session. Participants were given the opportunity to ask their doubts and the session was terminated systematically.

ACTIVITY- 2 : BALLOON ACTIVITY

This activity is very commonly used in training sessions for engaging the participants, for managing stress and also as an ice breaker. As we conducted the session for children under the age of 11 years, this activity was used for engaging the kids and giving them information in a playful manner. The participants were asked to blow a balloon and then try to keep it in the air for as long as they can. The task here was to not let the balloon fall down. Children did this activity enthusiastically and they learnt to focus on their hope to succeed while having fun. This activity was used as an energizer for kids and it helped in avoiding boredom and monotony during the session.

CONCLUSION

The participants were cooperative with the facilitators throughout the module. The participants were enthusiastic and cooperative. It could be seen that the children were very interested in games such as balloons, dancing games, etc. However, there were some difficulties in sustaining their attention during the debriefing and discussion sessions. This could be due to the nature of the topic ('Hope' may not be relatable to them. They may also have a lot hope or resilience already, and thus may not feel the need for such interventions),

high level of distractions from the environment (Since all groups were conducting the interventions at the same venue, due to noise levels, music, distractions from other groups, etc.), individual differences and personality factors, time constraints and so on. Overall, however, the children were very engaged, and reported that they had benefited from the session. They said that they had become more aware of the positive aspects of their lives and value of hope by the end of the session. The intervention itself aimed at the enhancement of their agency thinking and pathway thinking through the activity and debriefing process. This aim was achieved in this program. The parents who were observing their children in the session seemed happy about the events as well. The children and their parents were interacting more positively after the session.

The experience was extremely useful and eye-opening from the trainer's point of view as well. The effectiveness of the interventions, trainer skills such as flexibility, spontaneity, growth mindset, identifying and targeting the needs of each group of participants, modifying one's style of conducting interventions based on the level of comprehension and maturity of the participants, importance of cooperation and easy communication within the group of facilitators, etc. could be experienced and learned practically.

In conclusion, the community program was conducted successfully with the help of the children and parents who participated, the local law enforcement who were supportive, the facilitators themselves and the accompanying teachers and other members who lent their support.

Thus, the program ended on a positive note after distribution of refreshments.





GROUP – II
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

MEMBERS

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Department of Counselling Psychology, Madras School of Social Work, Chennai, collaborated with Inspector Rajeswari and her team to conduct a community welfare program. The MSc final year students of the department were assigned to conduct training programs for the population of the fisherman community at Pattinapakkam. It was a group activity. The session was planned for 2 hours. It was planned on 21st November 2022, Monday. The students reached the venue at 4:30pm.

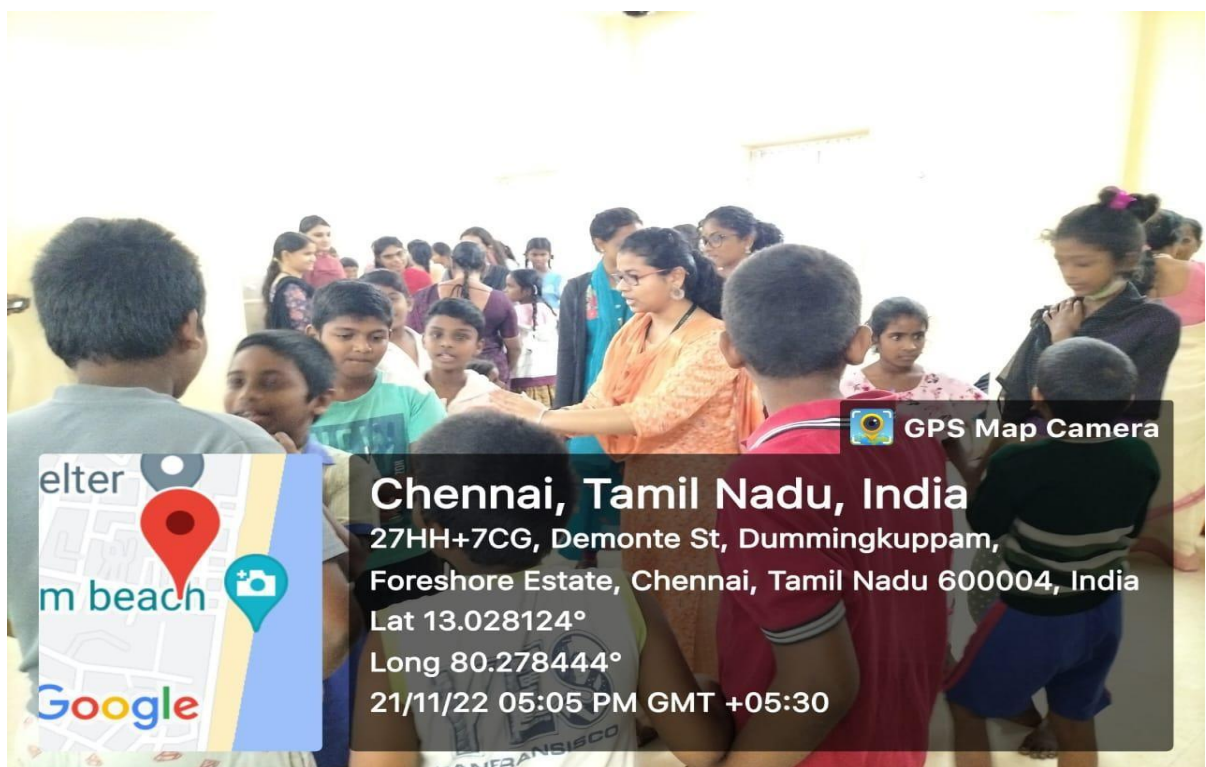
The group planned for a common ice breaker with other groups and then an ice breaker for the group separately. It was planned to conduct activity based sessions, where two activities – Adzap and Find your Balloon, were planned along with content related to the topic – Interpersonal Relationships.

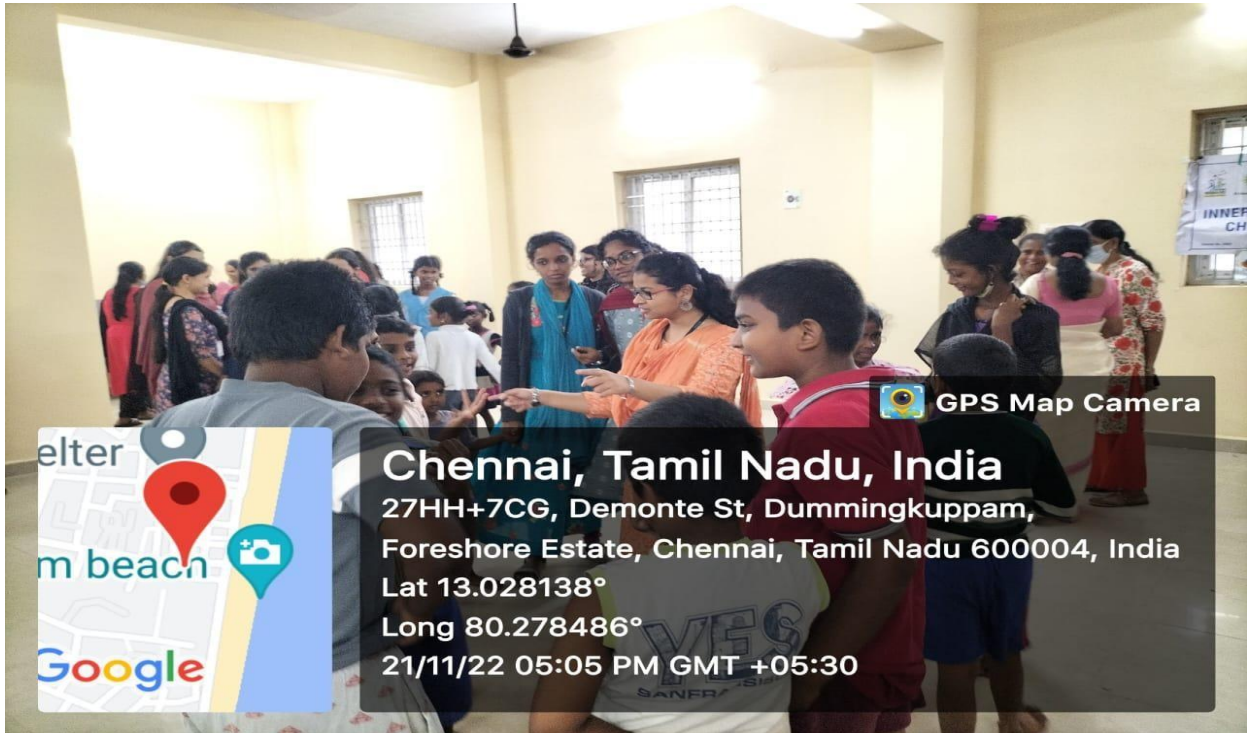
On arriving at the venue, it was observed that the population for the program were children. The children belonged to the age range of 2-10 years of age. The common ice breaker was performed and the same activity was used to divide into groups for each team of students. Then the ice breaker of the group was carried out to build rapport and to get oriented to the topic. Through this ice breaker, the participants were able to understand and communicate among other participants.

Then due to time constraints and other distractions, only one activity was able to be conducted which was, Find your balloon. In this activity, the participants were asked to blow a balloon, write their name in it, which was shuffled and then the participants had to find their balloon from the mixed ones. Again after shuffling, the participants had to pick a balloon and give it to the person, whose name is written. Based on this activity, the concepts of active listening, communication rules, self awareness, expressing needs and prosocial behaviour were discussed in brief giving examples related to their day to day activities. The participants

were actively participating and were involved in the session. However, due to time constraints and other extraneous factors, the session had to be ended with a short conclusion and reflection from the participants.

The participants of all groups were put together for a casual dance session thereby ending the program on a positive note.







GROUP – III

STRESS AND WELL BEING

MEMBERS

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On 21st November 2022, around 4 pm, the second year students of the Counseling Psychology department got a chance to interact with the people of Foreshore estate, Pattinapakkam, Chennai. The objective of the meeting was to engage and educate the people who are interested and involved in the program. A brief population sketch would be that they were residents from Pattinapakkam who were majorly fisherpeople by occupation and they belonged to the lower socioeconomic status. The inspector of Pattinapakkam, Ms. Rajeshwari helped coordinate the entire program along with the faculties from the Department of Psychology of MSSW to ensure that the interaction goes smoothly and is fruitful.

There were about 40 children ranging from ages 4 to 12. Since there were unanticipated changes regarding the timings and the entire population itself there was a dire need to modify the

proposed training module. It was catered to the given population with necessary trimming and altering of activities and instructions, the team proceeded with the common ice breaker.

To bring the participants in a rhythm, a common icebreaker was conducted for the entire group. The activity was called "*Fire in the mountain run run run*". An ingroup training method was adopted where the facilitators were involved in the activity as well. The activity involved playing music and stopping at random, based on the number yelled after the music was stopped groups were formed. This in group training was helpful in breaking the initial inhibition the participants had. Using the same icebreaker the participants were made into smaller groups. With approximately 10 to 12 children in each group, the facilitators began introducing the concept and activities relevant to the concerned topic.



The activity on line was "*balloon task*" where the facilitators began with asking the participants their understanding of the term stress and what they do when they realize they are stressed. After ensuring the chance of expressing their thoughts were fair, balloons were distributed to the participants and were instructed to blow the balloon. The ambiguity in instruction was intentional and was aimed to illustrate the effect of stress in their wellbeing. As per the method of

conduction, the instructions were given and by the end of the activity the participants were able to relate the balloon to their life and stress.

Following this, the trainers asked the participants to close their eyes and visualize a troublesome situation where they felt really stressed and frustrated. Constant prompts were given in order to help participants concentrate on the visualization. After that responses of the participants regarding how they are currently feeling were heard. Then the participants' existing coping strategies were unraveled through gentle probing and rephrasing.



This paved the way for the next activity, "*Dance your worry away*". The participants were explained how dancing could be an alternative strategy that helps them handle stress better along with their existing skills. Music was played and the floor was open for everyone to dance.

Initial inhibition was existing but it eased out when the songs of the participants preference were played. After a good number of songs, the activity was completed by asking how the participants were feeling after the dance. The feedback from participants was received and the session reached the conclusion when the entire group of participants gathered and pictures were taken.

Unanticipated change of participants population, trimming of activities to unforeseen extent, modification of activity flow, stimulus overload caused by other groups were few of the

challenges faced by trainers during this program. Even with all these challenges, the program turned out to be a successful event with the collective cooperation exhibited by the participants, audience, trainers and other notable figures who worked for this program.

To put it in a nutshell, the interaction with the participants gave a lot of insight and instilled confidence in the trainers and to top it the satisfaction gained out of this program was immense.

