

LEARNING GAMES FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS

Facilitator's Guide



REACH



INDIA
Self-Help Solutions

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About *Reach* India

Reach India's mission is to bring knowledge, lifeskills and linkages to massive numbers of poor rural women to build futures of health, hope and dignity for themselves and their families. *Reach* India does this by leveraging the power of groups and the dynamism of private enterprise to deliver proven services brokered from an array of global development organizations.

Reach India pursues this mission by strengthening self-help promoting institutions and the self-help groups they serve. For more information, please contact: info@reach-india.net or visit www.reach-india.net.

Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers

Introduction

You are about to begin facilitating Learning Games to help adolescent girls gain knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to improve their lives and become healthy, informed and empowered adult women. Adolescent girls, those between the ages of 10 and 19, face particular risks and challenges; however, there are few services available that meet their specific needs. The Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers presented in this guide begin to address that gap by covering topics of importance and interest to adolescent girls—health and finance—using fun, interactive activities. Encouraging mothers to participate in these Learning Games with their adolescent daughters and/or daughters-in-law enables mothers to support, or at least not impede, their daughters in the learning process. Beyond equipping girls to develop practical skills and decision-making skills that help them manage their health and finances, the Learning Games help them establish links with girls in their own village. These links lay the foundation for future involvement in women’s self-help groups, a growing movement in India that has supported women in gaining access to financial and other resources.

Overview of the Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers

The overall goal of the Learning Games is to improve the health, social and financial empowerment of adolescent girls. These Learning Games were designed to enable girls to

- Create and follow a savings plan and increase their savings.
- Practice simple behaviours to prevent diarrhoea and HIV/AIDS and improve their nutrition.

The objectives of each Learning Game are designed to achieve those overall objectives. The following table provides the title of each Learning Game and its objectives.

Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers	
Number and Title	Objectives
1. Getting to Know Each Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified themselves as thinkers, feelers or doers ▪ Reviewed how thinkers, feelers and doers contribute to a group
2. Ways to Save Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determined the easiest ways for them to try to save money
3. Steps of Bargaining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Named items they can try to get a lower price for by bargaining ▪ Practiced, or observed others practicing, using the steps of bargaining
4. What to Spend Money On	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritised what they spend money on
5. Making a Savings Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practiced making a savings plan
6. How to Prevent and Treat Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussed ways to prevent and treat diarrhoea
7. Practicing Hand-Washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyzed why hand-washing is important and when to wash hands ▪ Practiced the steps of hand-washing

Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers (continued)	
Number and Title	Objectives
8. Knowing Our Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussed the female and male reproductive systems and pregnancy
9. Food and the Flag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practiced how to use the colours of the flag to make healthy meals
10. How to Protect Against HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussed ways that HIV is and is not spread ▪ Identified ways to protect against HIV/AIDS.

Getting Started

The Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers are a set of short sessions. They are designed to meet adolescent girls' desire for lively, creative activities—games, stories, skits, songs, rhymes, etc.—to learn new information and skills. Pair- and group-work also provide girls with a non-threatening way to talk, address problems and bond around common solutions and actions. Even the quietest of girls can be drawn into the Learning Games. In the process, the Learning Games

- develop key life skills, such as decision-making, assertiveness, negotiating and self-awareness;
- give girls a chance to share and improve practical skills related to caring for their health and finances; and
- build a platform for girls' entry into self-help groups, which are important providers of social networks and financial resources for women.

Who can participate in and who can facilitate the Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers?

The Learning Games are focused on poor, adolescent girls—both unmarried and married—between the ages of 10 and 19 living in rural areas. Mothers and mothers-in-law are also encouraged to participate. Other adults and young children may show up at the Learning Games, as well. While they can be included, the focus should remain on adolescent girls. The girls could be members of a pre-existing group that meets at frequent intervals, such as a youth club; or daughters of members of a pre-existing group, such as a self-help group or women's club. They could also be students or a group of interested, like-minded individuals who are willing to meet regularly and actively participate in the Learning Games. The Learning Games work best with at least 10 but no more than 25 girls. A trained facilitator, preferably a woman due to the sensitive nature of some topics (particularly “Knowing Our Bodies”), is an ideal person to lead the Learning Games. If possible, the facilitator should group girls by age: 10–14 and 15–19 years of age, in order to conduct the Learning Games separately with each age group.

Where should the Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers take place?

The Learning Games require physical movement. Facilitators find they can more easily engage girls and their mothers if they have plenty of space to move. It is important for the girls and their mothers to have space to sit comfortably for small-group discussion, convene in a larger group and, for some activities, move or run around. A secluded or private area in the open is the ideal place to conduct the Learning Games. A secluded or private area ensures that the Learning Games will not be disrupted by curious onlookers. If necessary, a community hall could be used instead; however, some Learning Games involve activities that must be conducted outside. In these cases, a facilitator using a community hall must find a place outside for those particular activities.

When should the Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers take place?

The Learning Games should be scheduled at the convenience of the girls and their mothers—perhaps weekly or every other week. However, it is recommended that the first several Learning Games be scheduled close together—perhaps every few days or once a week—to build excitement and momentum with more girls gathering each time. The facilitator should conduct only 1 Learning Game per visit so the girls are not overloaded with new information and have time to practice new behaviours. The facilitator should try to complete each Learning Game within a reasonable time (between 30 and 40 minutes) because girls and their mothers are often busy and have little free time. It is important that girls and their mothers see the value of the time spent participating in the Learning Games and are eager to join in the next ones. Finally, it may not be possible to implement Learning Games that involve running during the monsoon season since outdoor spaces may be muddy and an indoor space may not accommodate that activity. Thus, it is important for the facilitator to consider the time of year in which to begin and end the set of Learning Games.

Which Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers are appropriate for which group?

The Learning Games address a variety of topics and can be used as stand-alone sessions based on the expressed interest of the girls or priorities in the region. However, it is important to note that they are designed to build on each other. Girls and their mothers review key messages and commitments from past Learning Games. They progress from “safe” topics, such as ways to save money and what to spend money on in early Learning Games, during which they build self-confidence and trust in each other and the facilitator, to more “sensitive” topics, such as reproductive health and HIV/AIDS in later Learning Games.

Preparing for Each Learning Game

Each Learning Game begins with an information box that contains a summary of the objectives, preparations, methods and time required to conduct the Learning Game. Review this information carefully. The “Preparation” section contains a list of items needed for each Learning Game. You need to have these materials ready before the Learning Game begins.

Other important information about the Learning Games follows:

- The detailed steps for each Learning Game are listed following the information box. Please conduct the Learning Game following the steps provided. Use your own words to explain each point, being careful to cover all of the steps in order, if possible. After each Learning Game, there is a page listing the adaptations the facilitator may need to make to the Learning Game: general adaptations, adaptations for groups of girls only or groups of mothers only.
- All of the pictures needed to convey important information are provided and are located in the Pictures section. Each picture is numbered and labelled for ease of identification. All of the pictures needed for an individual Learning Game are also listed under “Preparation” in the information box.
- Suggested answers to frequently asked questions are provided in the Resource Materials section, to assist facilitators to prepare for and implement the Learning Games effectively and confidently.

Additional Features of the Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and Their Mothers

- *Italics font* = instructions for the facilitator (Do not read this text to the girls and mothers.)
- Regular font = specific information or instructions for the facilitator to read or closely paraphrase to the girls and mothers
- Arrow (➤) = specific open question for the facilitator to ask the girls and mothers (Ask this question as it is written.)
- (Parenthesis) = additional instructions or information for the facilitator
- [Square brackets] = the correct answer to expect from a technical or closed question

Finally, the box below provides some important principles and practices of learning to keep in mind as you lead each Learning Game. Remember that you, the facilitator, do not have all the answers. The girls and mothers come to the meetings with experience and have many things to add. It is important that all teach and learn.

Important Principles to Remember

- Create a learning environment in which girls and mothers feel **safe** in sharing their concerns and successes.
- **Engage** girls and mothers in activities that require them to think and feel and do. Encourage them to **participate** by using games, small groups or skits.
- **Praise** girls and mothers for their efforts.
- Show **respect** by valuing the girls' and mothers' knowledge and experience with the subject even if their life experience, in your opinion, is limited.
- Provide girls and mothers with situations that reflect their day-to-day reality. Give them **relevant** problems to solve.
- **Do not tell when you can ask.** Whenever possible, ask girls and mothers for their suggestions or ideas instead of telling them what to do or think. Learning Games build life skills, such as decision-making, so pose questions that help girls and mothers to consider the benefits and risks of different options rather than telling them a correct answer.
- Ask **open**—not closed—**questions** to promote discussion and interaction.

LEARNING GAME 5: MAKING A SAVINGS PLAN

Objectives

By the end of this Learning Game, girls and mothers will have:

1. Practiced making a savings plan.

Preparation

- Rock or other object to pass
- Make sure you conduct the Learning Game in a secluded or private area.

Methods

- Step 1: Discussion
- Step 2: Game
- Step 3: Story-telling and gestures
- Step 4: Discussion
- Step 5: Cheer

Time

40 minutes

Steps

1. Ask questions about what girls and mothers learned last time – 5 minutes

Today we are going to discuss making a savings plan. Before we get started, let us review what you learned last time.

➤ What did you learn about needs and wants?

*[A **need** is something that is a basic necessity—something you cannot live without. A **want** is something that is not necessary—something you can live without.]*

➤ What was your experience trying to prioritise what you spend money on?

Allow a few girls and mothers to respond. Thank the girls and mothers for their contributions.

2. Facilitate game to brainstorm places people save – 15 minutes

In previous Learning Games, you learned about ways to save money and decided how to spend it. Now let us discuss making a savings plan to get the money. One part of a savings plan is where to save money. Think about all the places that you, your mother, other family members and friends save money.

Let us play a game to name all the places where people save money. Everyone sit in a circle.

After everyone is sitting in a circle, say:

You are going to pass a rock (*or other object*) around the circle while I clap my hands. When I stop clapping, the person who has the rock is going to name a place where people save money. You are going to repeat this until you name many different places where people save money.

Play the game. After many places where people save money are named, summarize them. Then ask:

➤ **What are the 2 most common places for girls to save money?**

After the girls agree on the 2 most common places to save money, divide them into 2 groups. Assign each group 1 of the 2 most common places for girls to save money. Then ask:

➤ **What are the 2 most common places for mothers to save money?**

After the mothers agree on the 2 most common places to save money, divide them into 2 groups. Assign each group 1 of the 2 most common places for mothers to save money. Then say:

Each group has 5 minutes to discuss how to answer the following questions about the 1 place to save money their group was assigned:

➤ **Why is it a good place to save?**

➤ **Why is it a bad place to save?**

You are going to share what you discussed with everyone after 5 minutes.

After 5 minutes, ask each group to share their discussion. (An example of a group's discussion is that a purse is a good place to save because it is safe, but a purse is a bad place to save because one can easily be tempted to spend the money.) After all groups share, summarize the characteristics of good and bad places to save. Some of the characteristics they may mention include safety, temptation to spend, accessibility, ease of spending, interest, discipline, etc.

3. Use story and gestures to explain a savings plan – 10 minutes

Where to save money is 1 part of a savings plan. Another part of a savings plan is a savings goal.

A **goal** is something you want to have in the future.

Savings are money you do not spend and set aside for future needs.

A **savings goal** is something you want to have in the future that needs money.

A savings goal and where to save money are 2 parts of a savings plan. Listen to the story of Malika's mother and her savings plan.

Story of Malika's Mother

Malika's mother has a savings goal to buy a new salwar suit for her 14-year-old daughter Malika for a festival. The salwar suit costs 1,000 rupees. The festival is in 10 weeks. That means that Malika's mother needs to save 100 rupees each week to be able to buy the salwar suit in time for the festival. She is going to save her money in a special hiding place in her house that nobody knows about—in a trunk.

- **What is Malika’s mother’s savings goal?**
[To buy a salwar suit for Malika for a festival]
- **When does Malika’s mother want to meet her savings goal?**
[For a festival in 10 weeks]
- **How much does Malika’s mother need to save each week to meet her savings goal?**
[100 rupees]
- **Where does Malika’s mother plan to save her money?**
[In a trunk, a special hiding place in her house that nobody knows about]

Then say:

The answers that you provided together make up Malika’s mother’s savings plan. To make a savings plan, you need to answer 4 questions:

- **What is your savings goal?**
- **When do you want to meet your savings goal?**
- **How much do you need to save each week to meet your savings goal?**
- **Where are you going to save your money?**

An easy way to remember the 4 questions of a savings plan is to use 4 gestures:

- What (*put both of your hands out to the side with your palms up*)
- When (*point to your wrist or watch*)
- How much (*rub your fingers together*)
- Where (*look to 1 side and then the other*).

Now, everyone stand up and let us practice the gestures to remember a savings plan together.

Say and make gestures with the girls and mothers:

- What (*put both hands out to the side with palms up*)
- When (*point to wrist or watch*)
- How much (*rub your fingers together*)
- Where (*look to 1 side and then the other*)

4. Have groups practice making a savings plan – 5 minutes

Like her mother, Malika decided to make a savings plan, but she needs your help. Malika usually gets money from her mother for sweets or chips a few times a month. Instead of spending the money, she decides to save it to buy something to go with her new salwar suit for the festival in 10 weeks.

- **What can Malika save for in 10 weeks that goes with her new salwar suit?**

After you receive 4 suggestions, divide the girls and mothers into 4 groups and assign each group 1 of the suggested items. Then say:

Your group is going to help Malika by making a savings plan for her. Remember the 4 gestures as you think about each part of Malika’s savings plan: what, when, how much and where. You know **what** her savings goal is: each group was assigned 1 item. And you know **when** she wants it: in 10 weeks. Talk about how much Malika needs to save each week to

meet her savings goal and where she is going to save. Be prepared to share your savings plan with the other groups in a few minutes.

➤ **What questions do you have?**

Respond to questions. Then give the groups a few minutes to work.

After a few minutes, ask each group to share each part of the savings plan they made for Malika: what, when, how much and where. Then say:

Like Malika and her mother, you, too can make a savings plan.

5. Ask for commitment to make a personal savings plan – 5 minutes

➤ **Who would like to commit to making a savings plan?**

After girls and mothers respond, say:

Thank you! I look forward to hearing about your savings plan the next time we meet.

Ask the girls and mothers to stand up in a circle. Say:

All together, pump your arm in the air 4 times while saying, “Girls and mothers stay strong together!” Then crouch down, jump up and say, “Chalo!”

When girls and mothers are done with the cheer, applaud their efforts and thank them for their lively participation.

Adaptations of Learning Game 5: Making a Savings Plan

Adaptations for Groups of Girls Only

Replace all references to girls and mothers with “girls” throughout the Learning Game.

Step 2: Instead of the 2 most common places, ask the girls to name the 4 most common places to save money. Then divide the girls into 4 groups and assign each group 1 of the most common places for girls to save money.

Adaptations for Groups of Mothers Only

Replace all references to girls and mothers with “mothers” throughout the Learning Game.

Step 2: Instead of the 2 most common places, ask the mothers to name the 4 most common places to save money. Then divide the mothers into 4 groups and assign each group 1 of the most common places for mothers to save money.