Facilitator note: use this module to organise play activities for all the training sessions (see notes in Module 0 – Before You Begin).

Materials
Everyday objects (for example empty cereal boxes, match boxes, plastic cold drink bottles and lids, brightly coloured material, clothes pegs, tin cans, plastic containers, stones, seeds, beans or rice, plastic cups), floppy doll, examples of home-made toys. Check the Resources section of this module for examples of how to make low cost play equipment. When using household objects as toys, avoid using very small objects with younger children as they may accidentally swallow/choke on them.

In Bangladesh, playing with the children during the training sessions was an integral part of every training session from the outset. This did require careful organisation and planning to ensure there was suitable play equipment, and that community workers were suitably prepared.

Icebreaker
Place some inexpensive everyday objects on the mat and ask the participants to show what a child might do with these things. Summarise this activity by emphasising that most children naturally enjoy and find ways to play with any objects or things that are around them.
Explain

Outcomes for the module (on flipchart).
As a caregiver you will:

1. Understand and explain to other caregivers the importance of play for a child’s development.
2. Help your child with cerebral palsy to enjoy types of play that promote her communication, movements, social and emotional skills, and learning.
3. Explore ways in which other children can be encouraged to include children with disabilities in play.

In Bangladesh there was a high demand from parents for medicine and ‘therapy’ for treatment. It was more challenging to get across the value of play. In our research, we found several children who sat or lay alone at home all day without any opportunities at all for play and/or interaction with other children. Unfortunately, in some cases, there appeared to be no change in play activities over the lifetime of the training project.

There needed to be far stronger links between the theory of the training session, and applying this to everyday activities at home. The home visits needed to be strengthened to ensure that they involved other members of the household. Caregivers themselves, generally mothers, often had very limited time to spend in caring for their child, which is why it is so crucial to involve other family members.

For the play module, involving siblings in the discussions is important.

Materials

Picture 7.01.
Alternatively, find other local pictures of children playing.

Ask the participants:
What is play?
Explain that play is any activity that a child CHOOSES to do, and has FUN whilst doing. Through play, a child uses her SENSES to explore and learn.

Ask the participants:
*What are our senses?*

Explain what the senses are and write these up on a flipchart:
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Touching/Feeling
- Smelling
- Tasting

Something else that works very closely with our senses, and is involved in play, is movement.

Activity In pairs, discuss which senses are being used in the following examples. Demonstrate the following play activities. If possible involve some of the children in the group:
- Enjoying the sound of a rattle/music (Answer – hearing)
- Handling different objects – soft, hard, prickly etc (Answer – touching/feeling)
- Hide and seek (hiding an object under a lid or box and getting the child to try and lift the box to find the object, or hiding yourself from them and seeing if they can move or look for you (Answer – seeing)
- Singing and clapping games (Answer – sight, movement, hearing)
- Splashing in water (Answer – feeling and movement)

Materials Picture 7.02

Ask Why is play important for all children? Does a child with cerebral palsy need to play? Put up the picture7.02 and allow time for discussion.
**Explain** that play is important for your child because:

- It gives her an opportunity to explore and therefore learn about things in her environment.
- It gives her opportunities to use and develop her senses.
- When she is having fun she will be motivated to move.
- It gives her opportunities to interact with other people and to learn to communicate.
- It gives her the opportunity to think and learn.
- Play is **FUN**, and every child has a right to it.

**Voices of Children**

In all the children’s interviews, being able to play was what made them happy. Conversely, not being able to join in and play with other children, and being left on their own, was one of the main issues which made them sad.

“I play alone at school and at home. I like to play. [Why do you play alone?] All the other children run around and play, but I cannot run. I like to go to the training and I feel happy when I hear that I’m going to training. [Why do you feel happy at training?] I can play there and they teach us many things. [When do you feel sad?] I feel sad when I see my friends playing and running around, as I cannot run like them.”

Child, Bangladesh

**Ask** Do children need expensive toys to play? Do they need help to play? What do you observe about the experience of children playing during the training sessions?

**Explain** that during the training sessions the children are not playing with expensive toys.

- Favourite toys are most often household items.
- Play is more important than toys. Almost anything can be used as a toy, if it is used in play.
- Some children will need help to play. All children will need the encouragement of their parents/caregivers, siblings and other children.
- Children with cerebral palsy may need additional encouragement, and may need special help and attention from caregivers, or from other children.

**MAKING AND ADAPTING SUITABLE TOYS**

**Materials**

Various suitable local materials. Pictures of different toys which can be made, and simple instructions (see Resource section).

**Activity** Look at a variety of simple toys that you can make. For each toy, briefly discuss how you can make it, and ensure everyone will get an opportunity to make at least one toy which they will be allowed to take home. This session can be run as a separate workshop session, where siblings can also be invited along to help make toys.
In Bangladesh, suitable toys were available for all the training sessions. By only discussing the toys ‘in theory’ we found that, perhaps not surprisingly, toys were not made at home. A key recommendation is for a more practical session, where parents and other siblings are allowed to make the toys and take them home. During the home visits, there needs to be more time supporting suitable play activities, and adapting/using household objects to play with the child.

**Icebreaker**  Ask each participant to talk about the toy they made in the previous session, and whether their child used it at home. Where possible, involve the children in saying whether they liked the toy, and/or demonstrating the toy.

**Materials**  Case studies (have printed on card, one case study per group). You can also make your own case studies from your local context.

**Activity**  Split the participants into small groups. Give each group a story and a picture of a child with cerebral palsy. Ask them to read through the information about the child, and then choose two games or activities to play with her. They should be activities that they think the child would like, and be appropriate to the child’s level of ability.

Taking the child’s disability into account, ask them to think about what they would do to help the child to play – what additional help might the child need? Then ask each group to feedback their ideas and discuss.

**Case Study 1**  (Picture 7.03)

This girl is stiff in her arms and her legs. She can move her arms a little by herself, but moves very slowly. Her mother takes care of her and has noticed that her eyesight is not good; she only responds to light or shiny objects.

Is this child in a good position to play? What could you do to improve her position to play? What kind of play activities could be encouraged?
Case Study 2 (Picture 7.04)

This girl is stiff in both arms and legs. Her head often pushes back, and her hands are always closed. She cannot sit without help, and doesn’t move by herself. She cannot talk, has poor eyesight, and responds with babbling and smiles when someone speaks to her. She lives in a tin shed house that has two rooms and an outside toilet. She is looked after by her grandmother. She normally sits all day on a red plastic chair outside her house. She doesn’t play with anything, as her grandmother says she cannot hold anything in her hand. Her grandmother is very busy working on the handloom during the day.

Is this girl in a good position to play? What could be done to improve her position? What kind of play activities could be encouraged? Who can help the child to play?

Case Study 3 (Picture 7.05)

This boy uses a special sitting chair. His speech is slurred and difficult to understand, but he can understand everything. Grasping with all of his fingers is difficult, but if you put something in his hand he can hold it for a few seconds with some of his fingers. His eyesight is good. He lives with his mother, grandmother, uncle and three siblings aged 4, 7 and 12 years old. What kind of play activities could be encouraged? Who else could be involved in the play activities?

Explain in the plenary some additional Guidelines for children who have difficulty hearing or seeing:

- If a child has been diagnosed with blindness or deafness, focus mostly on other senses for play.
- However, still try to practice the sense through play by giving opportunities to use that particular sense e.g. shiny mobile or vision box for a child who has difficulty seeing.

Ask the group the following questions. How much time do you have to play with your child? How can you involve others? Why is it important to involve others in playing with and caring for your child?
Explain in the plenary in the plenary discussion that, in reality, caregivers (mainly mothers) do not always have the time to play with their child. Make sure you cover the following points:

- It is really important to involve other members of the family in playing with the child.
- Instead of just asking another caregiver or other children, “Please play with my child,” be very specific. Tell her about one of the games we have discussed in this session or in the appendix. Show her how to play it with your child, and explain how and why it is important to your child’s development.
- With other members of the family, discuss the types of play, those that your child finds easy or difficult, and especially your child’s development needs.
- Involve other caregivers in thinking of games that can be played with your child.

Inclusion in play: What can we all do to promote greater inclusion?

Materials

Case study Jatul (you can replace this with you only case study example from your local context).

Activity In small groups ask caregivers to read the short case study below. Ask them to discuss the case study in their group and consider the following questions:

What are some of the main challenges faced by this child and the family? Are these issues that you have come across in your own community? What can be some of the barriers to children with disabilities being included in play in their own community? Is it important that they are included in play? Why? (Think about your own child or another child that you know.)

Case Study

Jatul is 12 years old. He has some difficulties with communication, but can express himself with a combination of words and signs. He cannot do anything with his right hand, and his right leg is weak.

He loves to go to school and is studying in class 5.

“I never miss school even on rainy or stormy days ...... I like it when my friends come and chat with me. The teachers are very nice.”

Jatul plays alone at school and at home. [Why do you play alone?] “All the other children run around and play. I cannot run ...... that’s why I play alone. I feel sad when I see my friends playing and running around, as I cannot run like them.”
Finding Solutions: Ask each group to think about ways that play can be more inclusive. Feed back to the wider group. Some possible solutions might include:

- Share what you learn from this training with neighbours and friends, so that they can better understand and can help with caring for your child.
- Take time to talk to siblings and other children and show them activities that your child can do. Adapt toys, games and activities to allow for children with disabilities to be included in play with other children.
- Enlist the help of a teacher at the local school. Ask them to talk to the children about how they can better include children with disabilities in their play. Perhaps they could set up a 'buddying' system to encourage children to buddy with children with disabilities in the community – especially when so many children with disabilities are not going to school.
- Set up your own parent support group. Children will get huge benefits from meeting up and playing with other children in the group. Your group could consider running a session on disability in your community.
- Look at how you may be able to change the local environment to allow those with a disability to access where children gather and play.

MONITORING PROGRESS

Ask each caregiver to share one activity that she plans to try at home with her child. During the next home visit, take each of the goals you set for your child during module 2 from the developmental chart and think of a game that you could play with her to develop that skill. What objects at home can you use to make a toy or toys that she can play with? How can you make everyday activities such as bathing, eating or dressing playful? Plan to discuss these with the community worker.

Alternatively, in the absence of follow up home visits, run this as an activity during the training session.

Materials
Flipchart with take home messages.

Take Home Messages:

- Play is very important for a child’s development. A child who does not play will not develop as much.
- We can use everyday simple household objects for play. Involve other children in making toys which are suitable for your child to play with.
- We can always find ways to help ensure that play is inclusive for all children.
RESOURCES

How to make simple toys

Most of the resources below on how to make simple toys are taken from Werner, D., Disabled village children. 1999: The Hesperian Foundation available at http://hesperian.org/. The book chapters are free to download.

Rattles

Making it: Plastic bottle/tin or bamboo. Stones or seeds or beans or rice to put inside. Lid or cork to close the hole.

Using it: Hold it a short distance away from the child’s face and encourage her to look towards the sound and movement when you shake it. Shake the rattle for a bit then wait for the child to react before shaking it again. Don’t shake it continuously. Encourage her to move her head towards the sound. Help her to hold the rattle, and encourage her to move her arm to make the rattle make a noise. Help her to practice holding and letting go of the rattle (taking it from someone, giving it to someone else). If the child drops or throws her toys, try attaching strings and help her learn to get them back by herself.

Mobiles

Making it: Tinfoil/CDs/bottle tops. Beads or seeds. Bells. Brightly coloured material. Egg boxes. Hang any shiny object or something that moves easily in a gentle breeze (e.g. tissues).

Using it: Hang above the child when she is lying on her back or on her side – she can enjoy watching the objects, and may try to reach and take them so that she can feel them, or make them move to hear the sound (e.g. bells).
Vision Box

**Making it:** Cardboard box. Mobiles – placed above her waist; not more than 3 objects. These can be shiny things (like an old CD or pieces of foil), brightly coloured beads, or light pieces of material that will move with a gentle breeze or blowing.

**Using it:** The child lies on her back with her head and upper body inside the box. This can be used for a child who cannot see well. The dark box with the shiny or brightly coloured mobiles may help her begin to use and train her eyes. She will enjoy looking at the bright or shiny colours, or watching the light material blow in the wind.

Texture Bag/Box

**Making it:** Material of different textures – soft; silky; corduroy; woolly; embroidered; netting. Piece of steel wool or plastic hair curler (scratchy feeling). Something hard – marbles, steel teaspoon, glass bottle Soft toy – teddy bear. Clothes peg. Plastic packet or noisy paper. Seeds or pods of different textures – smooth, rough etc.

**Using it:** This is especially good for children who have problems seeing well, and for those who do not move easily by themselves. Help the child to feel the different textures on the outside and inside of her hand. First touch the outside of her hand – then open her hand and let her feel it on the inside of, or put it in her hand. A child who can move her hands can practice taking and giving the objects.

Drum

**Making it:** Can or plastic container or pot. Stick or wooden spoon or metal spoon.

**Using it:** Help the child to hold the stick and to play the drum (involve the family and get others to sing with her. Involve the child in family or church gatherings where there is music or singing). Encourage the child to hold the sticks by herself if possible. Encourage her to move her arm by herself to hit the drum.
Push/Pull Rattle

**Making it:** Use a tin or plastic container that has a lid. Make a tiny hole in the lid and bottom of the tin. Put some small stones or seeds into the tin. Use a wire hanger to make a rectangular loop through the holes.

**Using it:** Help/encourage the child to hold the wire and push the toy away and pull it back towards her. Encourage her to walk/crawl while pushing the toy.

Putting In/Out

**Making it:**
Large tin or plastic container.
Small items (seeds, bolts, match boxes, stones, small plastic cups, scrunched newspaper balls, bottle tops or lids).

**Using it:** Encourage the child to pick up the small objects one by one. She can take them out of the container, and put them back in. Encourage her to talk about what she is doing – “in” and “out”.

Stacking Poles

**Making it:** Wooden base with stick or small poles or long paper towel rolls. Rings (cut holes into plastic lids, make ring out of foil, soft branches, woven grass, cut up toilet rolls). Blocks (out of cardboard from empty boxes or scrap wood) – make a hole in the centre.

**Using it:** Help the child to take a ring or block and place it on one of the rings. If there are different types of rings, help the child to match the ones that look the same. Encourage the child to count the rings as she puts them on.
Posting

Making it:
Plastic container or tin with plastic lid and shaped holes cut out.
Find small objects, and cut the holes in the lid to the same size and shape – use bottle tops, match boxes, small lids, and pieces of wood. Simple toy – objects and holes are all one shape. Complex toy – objects and holes are a variety of shapes.

Using it: Encourage the child to post the object into the correct shape and size hole. Help her to pick up and let go of the objects (if she has difficulty using her hands). Let her guide the object into the hole she wants to put it in. Talk to her about the size and shape of the different objects as she plays.

Visual Rattle

Making it: Plastic bottle filled ¾ with water, dishwashing liquid or something to make bubbles, small plastic beads or seeds that are brightly coloured or dark.

Using it: Use it the same way as the rattle discussed earlier in the module. Because of the different things to look at inside the rattle, the child can be encouraged to look at it for longer and longer periods of time when lying on her back, stomach, or in side lying. This can improve getting her attention for communication.

Other Musical Instruments

Making it: Bottle tops on a piece of wire. Container with small stones or seeds.

Using it: Help her to hold and play the instrument. Encourage her to take and let go by herself. Encourage her to move her hand or arm by herself so that the instrument makes a noise.

Soft Toy Rattle

Making it: Small bottle with seeds or stones inside. Material cut out into shape (ball, animal, bear). Stuffing. Needle and thread to sew it together.

Using it: Encourage the child to hold, touch and handle the toy. Show her that if she shakes it, it makes a sound. Encourage her to shake it by herself.