

WORKING FOR KIDS building skills

Training Module 4: *Supportive Environments are Key to Healthy Brain Development*

Key Points:

- In order to learn any skill, children first need to become **interested** in learning the skill, then to **engage** their own brain circuits in doing the skill. Lastly, they need to develop **self-confidence** in doing the skill so they are willing to repeat it thousands of times to develop strong brain circuits for the skill and to have the courage to progress with learning more difficult skills.
- Supportive environments help children learn new skills. When children are in an environment where they are loved, taken care of, and adults are there to motivate and encourage them, they will be more likely to learn new skills.
- Parents are not the only ones who can provide support for the child. Support can come from those who serve as charging stations in the community, such as a best friend, a teacher, a coach.
- Adversity in a child's environment causes children to focus their attention on other things, such as how to avoid the adversity, so the skills they strengthen change.

Summary of Lesson:

- Place the child surrounded by the **Cycle of Learning** on the **Supportive Environments** poster, and review the cycle of learning.
- Hold the black words (that represent positive attitudes that are supportive of the cycle of learning) in your hand and ask those you are training to name attitudes that support learning. Place words in the environment as they are named.
- Next, hold the red words (that represent adversities that distract children from learning new skills) in your hand and place these in the environment as they are named. As more red words are put up, take black words down as appropriate.
- In a participatory discussion talk about charging stations in the community (individual stations, stations that serve groups of children, and stations that serve many purposes).

