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healing lives...transforming communities



The Heart of the Family  
Women • Men • Families



## Community Health Evangelism (CHE)

CHE is a strategy for individual and community development encompassing the whole person through training that addresses physical, spiritual and social issues.

Around the world we encounter people who need healing in their family life. God's ideal is that the family be the place where character is formed, where one finds comfort in grief, joy in togetherness and encouragement in daily life. Yet too often the family is a place of brokenness.

Women are oppressed and devalued in many cultures. Children die in infancy or are raised with harshness. Malnutrition robs children of reaching their full potential, physically and mentally. Mothers die in childbirth due to what are often preventable causes. Fathers have no idea how to show love because their own fathers were cruel or absent. Infidelity is considered normal.

CHE addresses this brokenness by helping families and communities engage in introspective dialogue and curricula through the light of Biblical truth. As the truth of God's word combines with scientific knowledge, health is improved, relationships are healed and dignity is rediscovered. These programs are used most effectively with a CHE process, with community ownership and with neighbors teaching their neighbors what they have learned.

## Women's Cycle of Life (WCL)

WCL provides a curriculum which deals with women's health issues—from adolescence to child-bearing, from care of children to menopause. Family relationships (mothers-in-law, marriage, issues of forgiveness, love and respect) are addressed from a biblical viewpoint, using the lives of women in the Bible.

WCL lessons address gender equality from the perspective that we are all created by God with great value. This is astonishingly good news for women.

### How life has changed:

*"The lessons on personal hygiene changed my life and my family's. We thought soap was only for washing clothes, not for washing our hands and bodies. Now, even when water is scarce, we wash ourselves. We're amazed at how much less sickness we experience!"*

*~ an Ethiopian woman*

*"I've seen such a huge change in my wife since she had the WCL training. Our relationship and our home has changed too. I have such respect for her now and that is not something you see in our culture. She teaches other women about God's view of them from the Bible—that God sees them as having great worth. She's a model for our town and to the other women."*

*~ Garamu, husband of WCL volunteer*



## Programs for Women and Mothers

**Women's Prayer Groups** are a powerful means for God to work through women and mothers. Things happen when women pray together – for their children, for their husbands and communities, and for the children and families of their unbelieving neighbors. This has been an effective outreach to neighborhood mothers who are concerned about their children.

**First 1000 Days** is gleaned from a movement that addresses the nutritional needs from conception to age two that impact a child's potential over his or her entire lifetime. Our mothers' groups also provide support for mothers and guidance on how to raise emotionally and spiritually healthier children.

**Healthy Birthing Life Saving Skills** is based on the Home Based Life Saving Skills program. Addressing the major causes of maternal and newborn death, it helps communities discover how to improve the safety of pregnancy and birth. Appropriate for pre-literate as well as literate learners, the role plays use action cards and simulation practice to help communities understand the first steps in recognizing and managing life-threatening problems.

*"So many lives have been saved through this program."*

*~ Community development worker, Central Asia*





## Men Matter

The curriculum for men was designed because women requested it. They told us, “You have taught us so many important things. If you don’t also teach our men, then it’s like clapping with one hand.” Men are now some of the biggest champions as they experience positive insights and change.

Men Matter lessons are intertwined with the Christian Family series, Women’s Cycle of Life and Bible Storying to provide communities with a solid foundation for healthy families. Topics include: domestic violence, fatherhood, Godly marriage, friendship and becoming men of integrity.

### In their own words:

*“We’ve seen many good changes since CHE came to our village, but the biggest change has been in my family. My hard-drinking husband gave his life to Jesus after he joined the men’s CHE group. There he learned about God’s plan for a man to be a leader and helper for his family. We used to have pain in our hearts all the time, but now we have love, love, love!”*

*~ a Filipino woman*

*“After what I have learned, I will start helping my wife. From now on I will carry my son on my back and show the world that I love my wife, and I am ready to be on her side when she needs me the most, even though this goes very much against our culture.”*

*~ an Ethiopian husband*



## Family Cycle of Life

This curriculum combines WCL and Men Matter into a whole that is especially useful in cultures of male dominance. Participants attend as couples. Topics include male and female physiology, the needs of one's wife in pregnancy and childbirth, complications in pregnancy, parenting, domestic violence, managing conflicts, forgiveness and its consequences, a biblical view of women and men, and Bible Storying lessons on character qualities for Godly men and women.

### Results from training:

*“At the couples training, husbands and wives sat side by side - unheard of in their culture. When we taught the lesson on forgiveness, the participants were so touched that several of them knelt before their spouses and asked forgiveness for harsh words and actions, bitterness or unresolved anger. Months later their relationships continue to show great improvement.”*

*~ a CHE trainer in Africa*

*“A group of Christian leaders had just had a lesson on God's instruction to love one's wife as Christ loves the church, to nurture and care for her sacrificially. They began to weep, saying ‘We have said we love Jesus and want to obey His word, but we've never known about these teachings. In our families we've just followed what our culture taught us and we've been wrong!’ Their conduct toward their wives has since changed.”*

*~ an MAI missionary*

## Children's CHE

Kids' clubs can be a means of entry into a community. Children learn about God's love and then report to their parents what they've learned. Parents appreciate the changes they see in their children, as they learn about better health, respect for parents, and how to care for themselves and others. As a result, we often see parents request that they, too, have an opportunity to learn new concepts that can bring changes for their lives. Children also become leaders among their peers by living out what they are learning.

### Personal account:

*"When my family discovered I had a relationship with a boy, my parents imprisoned me at home, my brother wanted to kill me, and my mother crushed me with her words: 'You've lost your value by what you've done. You have destroyed yourself!' I tried to kill myself three times, but God saved me through the CHE kids' group. When they taught me I am precious in God's eyes, whatever my appearance or condition, it made a big difference in my life. I prayed to receive Jesus, and I know he has restored value to me."*

*~ 16 year old Marina*



## A Story from Children's CHE

**The following is an account from a woman in a small village:**

I have lived in this village for generations. My husband was a fisherman. Since he became sick, he has not been able to work. We have four grown children. We are from a strong Hindu family. I have two sisters and eight grandchildren.

To show you what our faith was like, one of my grandchildren was possessed by a bad spirit. She used to dance and act like a snake, hissing. Because of this, we made a hut for her, prayed to her, and treated her as a goddess.

Once some of the CHE trainers in our village visited our home and asked whether they could pray for one of my sisters, who was sick. Of course, we did NOT allow this, and asked them to leave our home. However, one of my granddaughters was in their CHE Children's club. This granddaughter told us the CHE trainers were praying for our whole family. I scolded her and told her to keep her mouth shut.

However, when I got very ill myself, my granddaughter was afraid for me, and brought the CHE people home to pray for me. When they came, my granddaughter also prayed with them. This melted my heart, and I started inviting them to pray with me regularly. Now I am going to their place of worship and host a prayer meeting at my home. We have removed the hut we made to worship the 'snake.' That granddaughter is healed.

We are experiencing true peace and joy. I have accepted Jesus as my personal Savior. We were in darkness, but Jesus gave us light. I thank God for the brothers who prayed for us and introduced Jesus to me.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then for the Gentile. Romans 1:16*





  
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