

Top Tips

Retention and Good Attendance

Before the programme/workshop

- Run programmes/workshops when it is easier to recruit and contact parents and carers or when they are more motivated – mid-late January, April/May, late September. Avoid clashes with other courses, religious observance and running programmes across longer school holidays.
- Provide a taster session where parents and carers can meet Facilitators and other parents and carers, settle children into crèche if applicable, maybe complete baseline questionnaires and find out more about the group programme. For online programmes this will also give an opportunity to work through any technical issues.
- If possible, Facilitators make contact with each parent/carer in person or over the phone to answer any questions they may have, reassure them of any concerns, and identify their reason for attending/challenges and link these to the content of the programme to inspire the desire and increase motivation to attend.
- Contacting parents and carers as above helps build a relationship and find out any issues that might prevent attendance. Ask them what you and they can do to help with attendance e.g. daily routine, appointments, work or holidays, child's routine, sleep, or nursery sessions.
- Send out a friendly card or text reminder before the first session with details of: venue (or meeting link if online), date, start time and include a contact number.
- Keep a waiting list - for programmes, if some parents and carers don't attend Week 1, others can be contacted to come along in Week 2. For workshops, where parents and carers drop out in advance you can then go back to the list to fill their space.

During the programme

- Create a warm and welcoming environment - remember to use Empathy Strengths and Paraphrasing and solution-focused questions.
- Follow up non-attendance with a friendly phone call and try to do this on a weekly basis – if a parent misses more than one week they are less likely to attend again.
- Consider offering parents and carers who drop out of programmes a stand-alone HENRY workshop.
- Send friendly text reminders in between programme sessions.
- Refer to the HENRY parent book and resources with parents and carers who have missed a session. Suggest they read the chapter of the week they have missed and mention any new resources given out that week and inform them of anything they may need to do before the next session.
- Engage crèche staff in the benefits of HENRY and create opportunities for them to share the benefits of children attending weekly crèche sessions (e.g. school readiness).
- Contact the referrer for feedback on non-attendance and discuss the way forward i.e. attend future programmes, HENRY workshops or HENRY 1-to-1 programme if available.