

# Caregiver experiences with a digital parenting intervention to prevent violence against children in Tanzania: Implications for digital parenting interventions

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## BACKGROUND

- Violence against children (VAC) is a major public health issue with short and long-term consequences for children.
- Parenting interventions are effective at reducing and preventing VAC, but they may encounter challenges related to human delivery.

**AIM:** To understand caregivers and adolescent views on relevance, acceptability, satisfaction, and usability of an app-based parenting intervention (ParentApp) delivered in a low resource setting in Tanzania.

## PARENTING FOR LIFELONG HEALTH

- Core content from in-person programs
- Tested in 15 Global South RCTs, scaled to 25 countries
  - Welcome & self-care
  - One-on-one time
  - Praise
  - Positive instructions
  - Managing stress
  - Family budgets
  - Rules
  - Calm consequences
  - Problem solving
  - Teen safety
  - Dealing with crisis
  - Celebration and next steps



## METHODS:

- In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted in 2023 with 21 caregivers and 18 adolescents.
- Participants were sampled purposely based on engagement levels in ParentApp
- IDIs focused on caregiver and adolescent experiences with the app, satisfaction, motivation to use the app, relevance, and challenges of using the app.



## FINDINGS

4 themes emerged on caregiver experience of using the app

### Finding 1: Widespread acceptability of the digital ParentApp among caregivers

*“Delivery through technology is easy. I love it because first, it saves time used as one goes on with their activities while going through the phone. That is better than going and sitting in a class and you will get few people because most of them are busy with their activities”.* (Female, Caregiver)

### Finding 2: Satisfaction and motivation to use the app

Sessions were relevant & caregivers learnt skills such as: spending time with their children, budgeting, communication with their children, budgeting.

*“How I saw the parent app, I mean it has changed me and how I take care of my children”.* (Female caregiver)

### Finding 3. Caregiver support with the use of the App

Caregivers received support from several sources to navigate the app. Examples of these were: facilitators, family members, community members and peers.

*“I usually seat with all my children to go through the app. We help each other to read. And if it is not me reading, one of them would be doing that...I tell them to read through the session”.* (Female caregiver)

### Finding 4. Challenges using the App

Busy school schedules that hindered caregiver-teen app time together; lack of electricity to charge mobile phones; and caregiver limited digital literacy thus needing support to navigate the app

## CONCLUSIONS

- It is feasible to digitally deliver a parenting intervention to prevent VAC in a low resource setting like Tanzania.
- The ParentApp digital parenting programme was acceptable, relevant to the parenting needs of caregivers.
- However, caregivers from low resources settings may benefit from digital support to effectively engage and use the app with their adolescents.

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