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# Parenting Education

## Guidebook







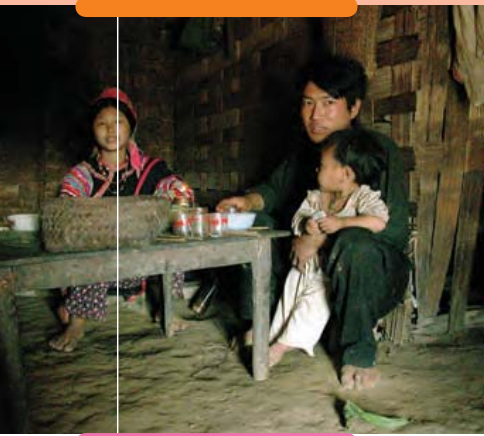
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# Introduction Booklet

## Parenting Education Guidebook





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# Introduction Booklet

## Parenting Education Guidebook

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## FOREWORD

Early childhood is a critical stage of human development. During the first years of life significant changes occur in the brain, and a child's interactions with his or her family and the wider environment literally shape the child's development.

Expanding and improving early childhood care and education (ECCE) is the first of the six Education for All (EFA) goals. It is one of the most neglected goals, however, with very low public funding allocated to this critical foundation of lifelong learning.

Advocating for the expansion of quality ECCE programmes for all children, UNESCO promotes parenting education to support parents and families to be effective caregivers and educators. As part of the "Community Learning Centre Equivalency Programme and Lifelong Learning to Reach the Unreached" project, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok) established the Parenting Education Programme, which aims to help improve the quality of non-formal ECCE by supporting parenting education offered at Community Learning Centres (CLCs).

The Parenting Education Guidebook aims to raise awareness of the importance of ECCE and the crucial roles that caregivers play in a child's health, development, learning and happiness. It is designed to provide essential, practical information about ECCE for all caregivers, including parents, grandparents, siblings and community members.

The Guidebook is divided into an introduction section and nine booklets, each of which includes concrete actions and activities that caregivers can practice, using everyday materials.

The accompanying Facilitators' Handbook for Parenting Education is for the facilitators who will guide the Parenting Education Programmes.

The Guidebook and Handbook are based on the findings of scientific research as well as on current practices and needs of parenting education, as identified through a survey conducted in five countries in the Asia-Pacific region: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, Samoa and Viet Nam.

The Guidebook and Handbook will be adapted to local contexts and translated into local languages in the five countries listed above, and we welcome other countries to do likewise, in consultation with our office.

It was a big challenge to produce a guidebook and handbook about parenting education that are informative yet simple and adaptable to the diverse social and cultural contexts of the Asia-Pacific countries. In achieving this, particular thanks go to Glen Palmer, an independent consultant, who prepared the text, and to Mami Umayahara, of UNESCO Bangkok, who coordinated the overall project and supervised the publication of the Guidebook and Handbook, with the invaluable assistance of Ashima Kapur. In addition, thanks go to Lois Harvey, who prepared the survey report that informed these publications.



Thanks are also due to the representatives of Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, Samoa and Viet Nam who participated in the survey and provided critical inputs and practical advice during a workshop organized by UNESCO Bangkok. Both publications were also immensely improved by comments and suggestions from the UNESCO Bangkok ECCE Advisory Committee members: Hameed A. Hakeem (UNESCO Bangkok), Laura Peterson (Hands to Hearts International), Maki Hayashikawa (UNICEF-EAPRO) and Yoshie Kaga (UNESCO Paris) and the inputs of David Feingold and Justine Sass (UNESCO Bangkok).

Last but not least, special thanks are due to the Government and People of Japan, whose generous financial contribution made these publications possible.

I trust that you will enjoy reading these publications and urge you to become advocates of ECCE and effective educators of young children in your families and communities.



Gwang-Jo Kim  
Director  
UNESCO Bangkok  
Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education



## COMMUNITY-BASED PARENTING EDUCATION: AN INTRODUCTION

### Overview of the Parenting Education Programme

The Parenting Education Programme is part of UNESCO's larger "Community Learning Centre Equivalency Programme and Lifelong Learning to Reach the Unreached" project and consists of a series of workshops held at Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in various countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

CLCs are local educational institutions outside the formal education system and are usually set up and managed by local communities to provide various learning opportunities. CLCs have proven as effective platforms for outreach, particularly for groups that are difficult to reach through the formal education system.

The Parenting Education workshops are about the care and development of babies and young children. The workshops build on what parents already know, while introducing them to new information and ideas, using booklets and activities. Participants at the workshops have opportunities to share and discuss issues related to each topic. At each workshop they are given a booklet to take home and share with their families and others in the community.

#### WHO ARE THE WORKSHOPS FOR?

Caring for children is a concern for the whole community. Therefore, the Parenting Education workshops are for anyone in the community who wants to learn more about how young children develop and what adults and older children can do to help them. They are of particular interest and value to parents and others who have direct responsibility for the ongoing care of babies and young children, including fathers, who play a vital role in bringing up their children.

## WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED IN THE WORKSHOPS?

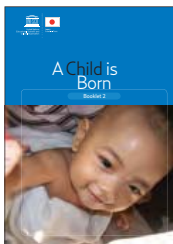
In addition to an introductory session, nine topics are covered by the workshops. Each workshop covers a separate topic and each topic has an accompanying booklet.

*The nine topics are as listed below:*



### TOPIC 1: Caring for Children

This topic considers what it means to be a parent and what responsibilities everyone in the family and the community has for the health and safety of babies and young children. It also informs about the needs and rights of babies and young children.



### TOPIC 2: A Child is Born

The focus in this topic is on pregnancy and on the health and care of the mother and baby before, during and after the birth. Emphasis is placed on the importance of bonding between mother and baby, beginning with breastfeeding.



### TOPIC 3: The Developing Child

The development of the brain and a child's learning and development is explained in this topic. Expectations for development at various ages are outlined, together with suggestions for ways parents can help their children to reach their developmental potential.



### TOPIC 4: Health and Nutrition

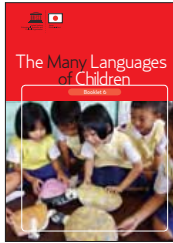
This topic covers the main risks to the health of young children, their causes, together with ways of preventing them. The importance of adequate nutritious food for children is also presented.



### TOPIC 5: Play in the Lives of Children

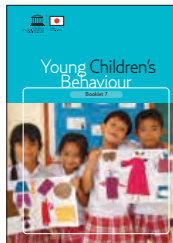
This topic shows how play supports all areas of children's learning and development. There are practical tips on activities that can be done with children, and on how the local surroundings and everyday materials can be used for children's play.





### TOPIC 6: The Many Languages of Children

This topic looks at the many different ways that babies and young children communicate. It also emphasizes the importance of children using their mother tongue. There are tips given for activities that help develop children's language, including those that build a strong foundation for reading and writing.



### TOPIC 7: Young Children's Behaviour

This topic gives information on young children's behaviour and what behaviour is reasonable to expect at different ages. The importance of using positive approaches rather than harsh punishment is emphasized, and many positive strategies are provided in this topic. Having a good relationship with children is emphasized as the first step.



### TOPIC 8: Children with Disabilities

This topic calls on families and communities to respect all children and include everyone in the family and community life. It focuses on children with disabilities and offers many ideas for supporting young children with disabilities.



### TOPIC 9: Going to School

Beginning school is an important step for all young children. In this topic suggestions are given for how parents, families and others in the community can work together to make school a successful and enjoyable experience for all young children.

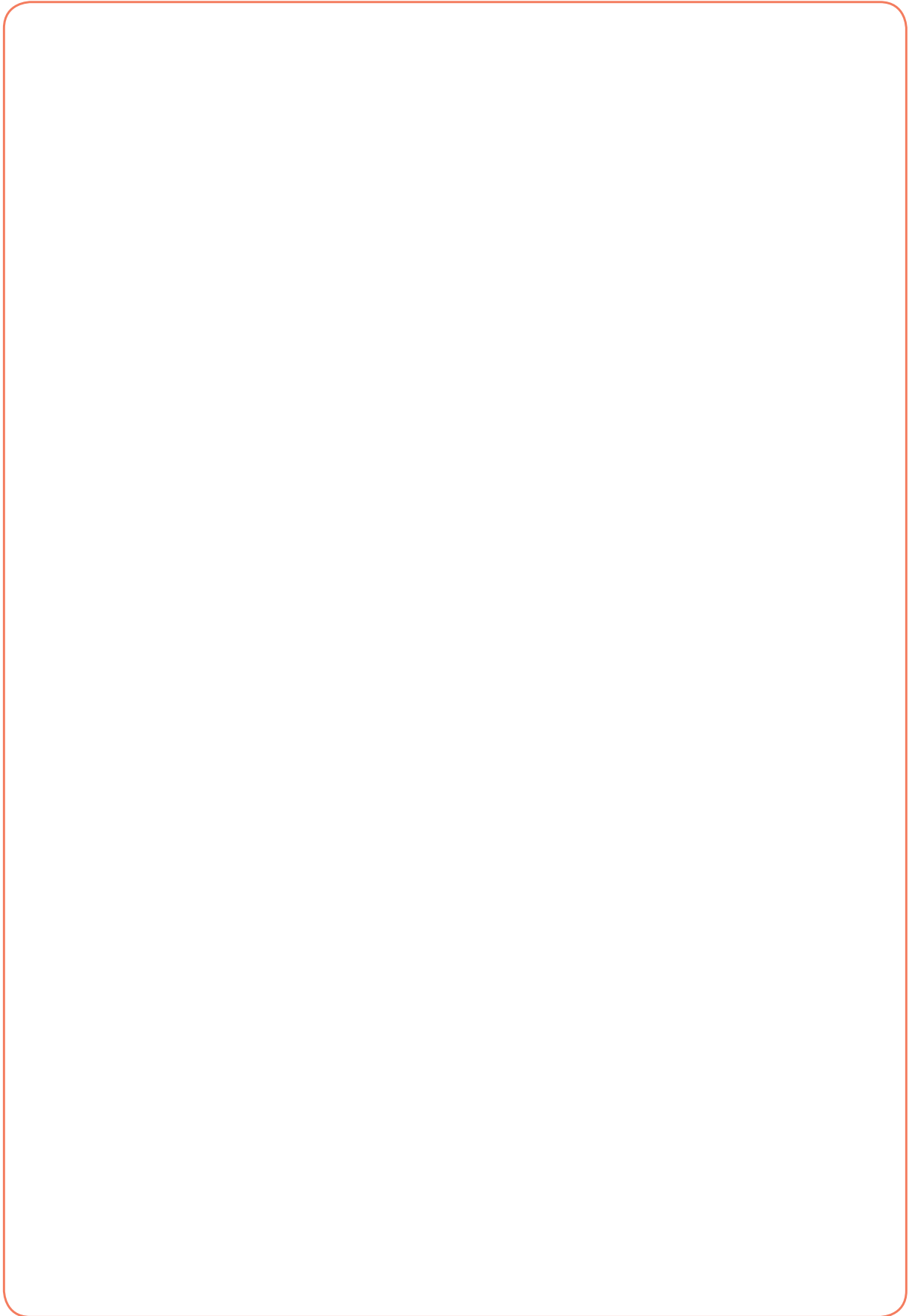
## WHAT HAPPENS AT THE WORKSHOPS?

The Facilitators will decide with the participants how often to conduct the workshops. Each workshop is about two hours long, but can be shorter or longer if the community prefers this. All workshops will be interactive – there will be activities that encourage the participants to talk and share knowledge and experiences with other participants. These activities will generally take place in small groups. They will sometimes include games, role play and other interesting and active learning strategies.

## WHERE CAN MORE INFORMATION BE FOUND?

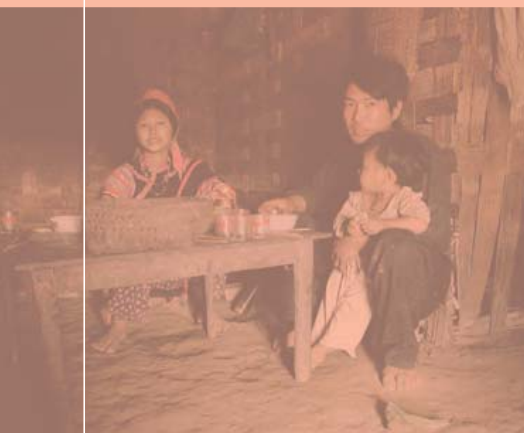
Workshop participants can talk to the workshop facilitator if they would like more information about the topics covered or other topics. The facilitator can organize additional workshops that meet the particular needs of each community and can arrange for additional materials for participants to read.

## NOTES



## Introduction Booklet

This booklet provides an overview of the Parenting Education Programme as well as lists down briefly about the focus of the topics covered in the nine booklets as part of the Guidebook. It also briefly describes what happens at the facilitators' workshop and where the participants could find more information about each topic covered in the Guidebook.



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# Caring for Children

Booklet 1



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# Caring for Children

In caring for young children, caregivers (parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members and community members) are performing a very important role. They hold the future of their communities in their hands.

ALL CHILDREN NEED TO FEEL LOVED and safe so that they can grow up healthy, happy and able to play an active part in their community and society. This booklet, "Caring for Children," is designed to help ensure children feel loved and safe by providing caregivers with information about their roles and responsibilities, the rights of children and how to protect children from harm.

The Parenting Education Programme is designed to help communities, but not to tell them what to do. It recognizes that knowledge about children and child rearing already exists within every community. But it also recognizes that times are changing and many communities face challenges in caring for young children. The workshops as part of the Parenting Education Programme provide opportunities to talk about existing child care practices and also opportunities to learn how to handle some of the challenges caregivers face today in bringing up young children and supporting their growth and development.





## WHO IS A PARENT AND WHO IS A CAREGIVER?

All children need parents. But when we use the term “parent” in this Guidebook, we mean all of the caregivers who provide ongoing care for children, not only the birth parents. Caregivers are the people who provide children with the ongoing care and support they require to survive and thrive. While birth parents are the usual people to perform these tasks, many other people can too, including grandparents, siblings and other members of the family or community.

## WHAT IS A FATHER’S ROLE?



Traditionally, women take on the main child caring role in most communities. Fathers have equal responsibility for their children’s care, however, and what they do has a big impact on the development of their children. Studies have shown that when fathers are involved in caring for their children, the children develop better social and emotional skills and do better at school.

Some fathers are very involved with their babies and young children, and enjoy being with them. Many are present at birth and later take on a major parenting role. Other fathers see their role differently. They may provide food and shelter but have little involvement in the daily lives of their children, except perhaps to discipline them. There may be traditional reasons for this, or perhaps they have been discouraged from taking a more active role as a parent.

Evidence suggests that many men would like to know more about caring for their children but are reluctant to admit that they lack knowledge or admit that they would like to know more about child care. Furthermore, often child care programmes are directed towards women and teenage girls, and men may feel awkward amongst the women or think other men will laugh at them if they attend such programmes.

The Parenting Education Programme aims to include boys and men of all ages, either in the workshops or in men-only sessions where they may feel more relaxed about discussing their beliefs and challenges. Let the facilitator know what would work best in your community.

In the meantime, here are a few questions to think and talk about:

- **What responsibilities does a man have in your family?**
- **Does it include being a father and caring for children?**
- **Do most young children have a father living with them?**
- **Do fathers interact with their babies and young children? If yes, then how?**
- **What are some of the good things they do?**
- **Are there any harmful practices of child care in your community – that is, practices that you would like to change?**



## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Most countries recognize that children have rights. These countries have laws to protect the rights of children and to support their healthy development and well-being. Some common areas included in these laws are:

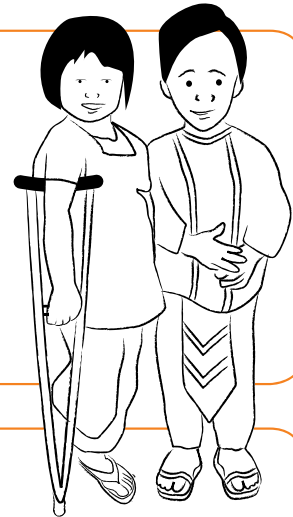
- **All children have a right to life, survival and development.**

This means that children have a right to proper care. They and their mothers should have good health care and nutrition, and protection from diseases. Children have a right to grow up in a healthy and safe environment, and have a right to learning opportunities that support their development.



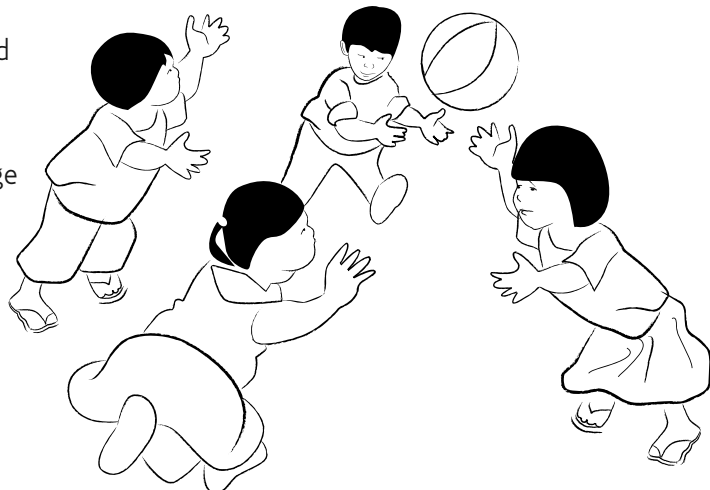
- **All children should be treated fairly, without discrimination.**

All children must be given the same levels of good food, care and opportunities for development. This is particularly important in relation to girls, children with disabilities, children affected by HIV and AIDS or other diseases, and those from ethnic minorities.



- **All children should have time for play and leisure.**

All children have a right to play and be with friends. Play supports all areas of a child's development – social, emotional, mental, language and physical development. It is the way babies and young children learn.



• All children have the right to education.

Children have a right to free primary schooling and to services that encourage them to stay at school. They should also be able to attend a good early childhood programme; children who attend these programmes are more ready for school and are more likely to stay at school.



• All children should be able to express an opinion.

Even very young children should have the opportunity to express opinions and make decisions on things that affect their daily lives. By asking their opinions we show respect for children and strengthen our relationships with them. Child rearing practices should respect children and help them grow up feeling safe and loved, and knowing they can trust their parents, the most important people in their lives.



**KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE**

Caring for children includes keeping them safe from dangers in the home and community. This involves protecting them from accidents, from all forms of abuse and from violence within the home and the community.

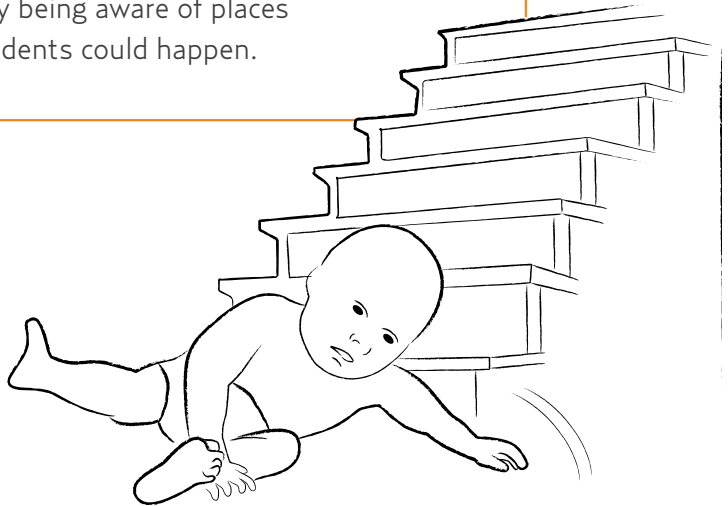
**Preventing accidents**

Many children get hurt or die each year from accidents. Most of these accidents can be prevented. Young children often do not understand the risk of accidents. It is up to parents and other caregivers to protect them from danger and injury. The risks change with the age of the child.

**THE MOST COMMON ACCIDENTS AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN ARE:**

- Burns and scalds
- Falls
- Drowning
- Poisoning
- Road accidents
- Electric shocks

Caregivers can prevent accidents by being aware of places in and around the home where accidents could happen.





**HERE ARE SOME BASIC GUIDELINES FOR CAREGIVERS TO PREVENT CHILDREN'S ACCIDENTS:**

- **Make cooking places safe**, and make sure that children cannot reach pots on the stove.
- **Supervise babies** and small children at all times.
- **Never leave babies** and young children unattended near water (they can drown in as little as 10 centimetres of water).
- **Keep insecticides**, cleaning liquids, detergents and other chemicals out of reach of children. Never keep kerosene, gasoline or chemicals in soft drink bottles, which children might be tempted to drink.
- **Keep medicines** (both tablets and syrups) out of reach of children.
- **Hold children when crossing a road.**
- **Cover all exposed electrical wires** and plugs in the house (when children are under two years of age the electrical plug points must be covered so as to prevent children putting their fingers in them and being electrocuted).
- **Keep sharp and pointy objects** such as knives and scissors out of children's reach.
- **Keep children away from harmful animals** and supervise children at all times when they are with any animals; even a normally friendly pet dog can be a danger to a young child.



## Protecting children from abuse

There are three main types of abuse that children need to be protected from:

### • Abuse can be physical

Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, kicking, pushing, burning and anything that causes pain or injury. Punishment that involves hurting a child (such as spanking) is today perceived in many countries a form of physical abuse. Violent punishment not only harms children's bodies, but can also damage them emotionally for the rest of their lives. If violent or harmful punishments are used in your community, it is important to identify ways of stopping them and to instead use non-violent ways to discipline children. Refer to booklet 7 titled "Young Children's Behaviour" in this Guidebook for more information about managing the behaviour of children.

### • Abuse can be emotional

Caring and warm relations within the family help children to feel emotionally secure and give children a basis for developing positive feelings about themselves and their families and for developing good relationships with people outside the family. If children are neglected, constantly shamed and criticized, or if adults abuse them with negative comments or bad names, children are likely to develop negative feelings about themselves. They may become withdrawn or even violent. Instead of criticizing and shaming children who are not behaving correctly, ignore their bad behaviour. It is important to focus on children's good behaviour and give them a lot of praise when they behave well.

Many television programmes are very violent and meant for adults only, and watching such violence can cause emotional harm to children. Parents therefore need to monitor the kinds of programmes children watch on television and prevent children from watching unsuitable programmes (for example, by disconnecting the television set when the parents are not watching it).

### • Abuse can be sexual

Sexual abuse includes all forms of improper touching and sexual acts. While perpetrators of sexual abuse are sometimes strangers, they can often be family members or close friends. Parents need to be watchful of young children and protect them from anyone who could potentially harm them, including family and community members.

## Preventing violence in the home

Violence in the home ("domestic violence") is usually committed by a more powerful member of the household against a less powerful person – usually by men against women and children. Even if the blows do not fall on the children, they witness what is happening and live in fear of the next outburst. Living in fear can affect children's eating and sleeping habits and can cause health, emotional and mental problems. Furthermore, children who see violence often copy the behaviour and become violent themselves, as children or as adults.

If you know a woman or a child living in a violent situation, it is important to try to stop the violence. This might involve discussing the situation with the woman or children and raising their awareness about organizations that can help them, or could involve taking the woman or children to a shelter for victims of domestic abuse. It would also be better if you can talk to the mother/father or to a community head person about this issue, for taking their advice.

## SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Being a parent has become harder for many people in recent times. Traditional patterns of child rearing are changing and many parents do not have the support they once had; they may not have an extended family to help them with watch over their children and to teach them how to bring up their children.

Some parents may see very little of their children because of long working hours or living away from home and therefore face enormous challenges in caring for their children. Furthermore, economic hardship, civil strife, natural disasters or other crises undermine the ability of many adults to provide high quality care for their children. Many children are at risk because of this.

At the same time, children are being exposed to a world very different from that in which their parents grew up. All of this can have a negative effect on children and on the relationships between children and their parents.

Think about your own family. What is it like being a parent in your community today? How has this changed since you were a child, or since your parents were children? What support do parents in your community need in bringing up children?

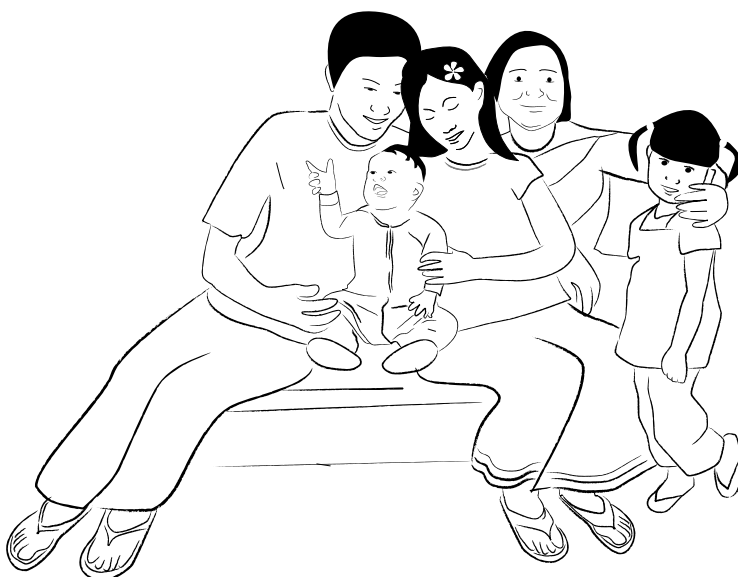
## EARLY CHILDHOOD IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Many parents need support in raising their children. They have a right to expect government support in fulfilling their role of bringing up the nation's children. This may not be forthcoming, however. On the other hand, every local community is rich in human resources, local knowledge and wisdom.

In many parts of the world, local communities are using these resources and taking action on behalf of children. The goal is to improve the conditions for all children (living in the community or city) and make their communities and cities child-friendly.

How child-friendly is your community? Do all young children in the community have equal access to basic services (healthcare, clean water, sanitation, education, social services)? Is recognition given to their rights to protection, to play, to live in a family, to have an education and to participate in community life?

**After thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of your community, consider the following: What can you do to make your community a better place for babies and young children?**



### WHAT YOU CAN DO?

- Observe young children in your family and in the community. Are their rights being met? If not, think what can be done about this and discuss your ideas with others.
- Become aware of how you interact with your boy and girl children. Do boys and girls receive the same amount of attention, food and health care? If not, consider what you can do about this.
- Both mothers and fathers can spend more time with their children, interacting and talking to them as they do their daily activities such as preparing food, cleaning, shopping or gardening.
- Tell stories to children and encourage them to ask questions and talk about the story.
- Listen to children and give them opportunities to express opinions and make simple choices. For example, choosing what clothes to wear or food they will like to eat.
- Ensure that all children have opportunities for leisure and play.
- Always supervise babies and young children. Check in and around the home for possible safety risks.
- Teach children to respect others (both adults and children); help them to understand that they have no right to hurt another person.
- Encourage your children to talk to you if they seem worried. Listen to them and take action if it seems they have been abused.



## Resources and services available in the community

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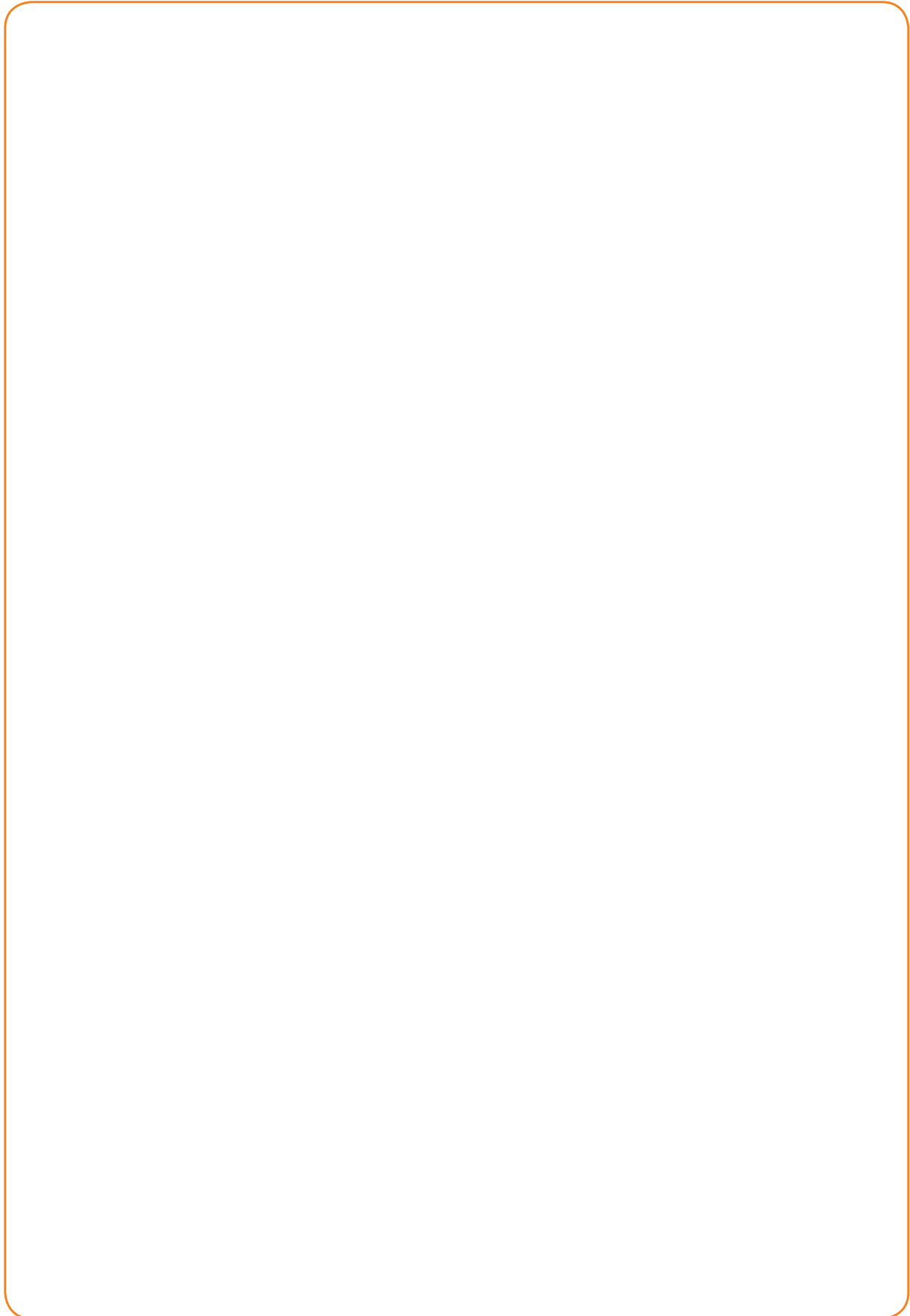
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## NOTES



• **Booklet 1: Caring for Children**

• This booklet considers what it means to be a parent  
• and what responsibilities everyone in the family and  
• the community has for the health and safety of babies  
• and young children. It also informs about the needs  
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# A Child is Born

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# A Child is Born

The journey from conception to birth is truly amazing. There can be many dangers along the way, but with proper care and support the outcome should be a happy one for everyone.

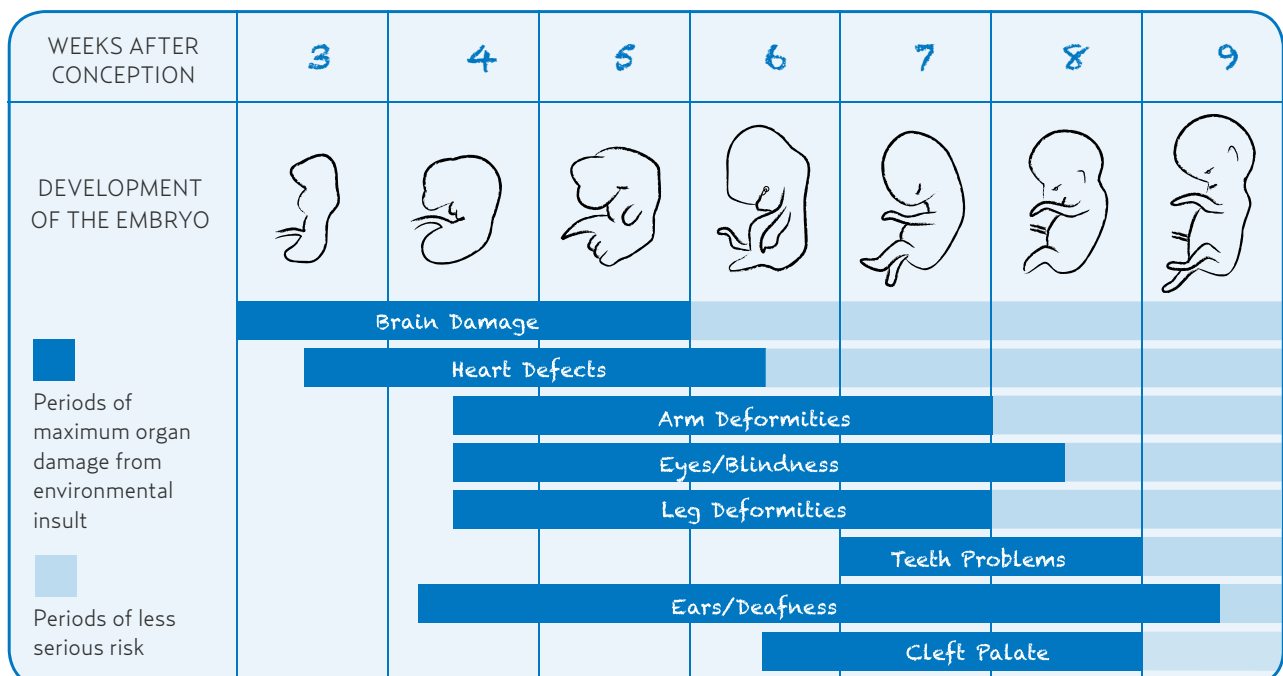
## DEVELOPMENT FROM CONCEPTION TO BIRTH

Seeing is believing! We hope you are able to see a video or DVD of a baby's development. Here is a snapshot of what happens:

**The first 2 weeks:** The baby-to-be (embryo) is formed and implants itself on the wall of the mother's uterus.

**Weeks 3 to 9:** This is a very busy time. Body parts and organs, such as the heart, lungs, stomach and brain, are developing and begin functioning. Mothers should be particularly careful during these weeks. Addictive substances such as alcohol, caffeine, betel nut or cigarettes, as well as some medications, can harm the developing baby. Maternal infections such as German measles can also cause serious problems at this time. That is why it is so important for women and girls to have the recommended immunisations before they become pregnant.

*Critical periods of Maximum Developmental Risk during Prenatal Development*



Adapted from: Moore (1993), Fig 9-12. © Elsevier Inc.

**3 months:** The foetus is about 3 inches long; the sex organs have already been formed; the bones are beginning to form and the baby has fingerprints.

**4 months:** Hair appears; ears are fully formed; there is rapid bone growth.

**5 months:** The brain is developing rapidly now; hair begins to grow.

**6 months:** Eyes are completely formed, as are fingernails; lungs are working; the baby can hear sounds and may kick in response to loud sounds. The mother should be able to feel the baby moving around.

**7 months:** The baby seems to have periods of being asleep and awake; lungs and brain are working well enough so that the baby may be able to survive outside the womb if it is born early.

**8 months:** The baby is more sensitive to light and sound; opens and closes eyes frequently; hair is growing on the head; the fingernails have reached the end of the finger tips; taste buds developed and can taste sweet and sour in the fluid.

**9 months:** The baby's weight should double in the last month; the brain continues to develop; the baby already has many reflexes, such as sucking, that will help its survival.

## HEALTH AND CARE DURING PREGNANCY

The health of a mother and her unborn child depends a lot on the care she receives from her family and community. This begins with recognising the rights of women and girls to equal treatment, and bringing about changes in attitudes and behaviour that discriminate against them. Women who are in control of their lives are more likely to do what is best for their child and to seek medical attention if and when it is needed. Fathers who are well-informed about pregnancy and related risks are more likely to be supportive and to behave in ways that support the well-being of the mother and child.

### • Visit to a Health Centre

Pregnant women should visit a health centre regularly before the birth of their child. Check what is recommended and available in your country. If possible, the first visit should be made as soon as a woman suspects she is pregnant. A blood test can be taken at that time to confirm the pregnancy. A nurse at the health centre can find out if the mother-to-be has any medical

problems, and advise her on what to do. Vaccinations and tests for Sexually Transmitted Infections such as syphilis and HIV or AIDS are usually given at this time. Iron, folic acid, zinc and other supplements may also be given. Without this professional care there is more likelihood of a premature birth, low birth weight baby (i.e. baby weighing less than 2500 grams or 5 pounds), foetal death or disability.

### • Adequate nutrition

The unborn child depends on its mother for food. During pregnancy and while breastfeeding, she needs increased quantities of nutritious food and adequate supplies of food with iron, folic acid, iodine and other minerals. If she has a safe and nutritious diet during her pregnancy the baby is more likely to be born full-term and healthy.



## • Rest and stress-avoidance

Women are likely to feel more tired during pregnancy. They require enough sleep at night and may need to rest through the day. Both at home and in the workplace, pregnant women should be encouraged to avoid heavy work and to have rest periods.



During pregnancy, women may also experience emotional stress. While this is quite normal, the family needs to support them at this time. Excessive stress can undermine the mother's health and have harmful effects on the baby by reducing his/her heartbeat, breathing rate and level of activity. Everyone in the family can help by sharing the daily work load of the mother-to-be.

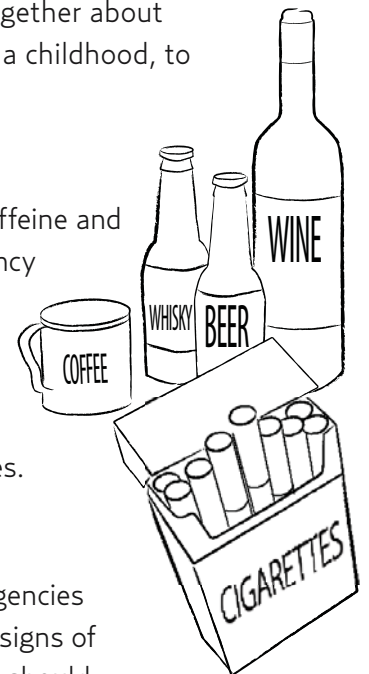
## • Timing births

Too many births, births too close together and births to adolescent girls under 18 increase the risks to both mothers and their babies. The recommended timing between births is two years. Practicing "safe sex", using contraceptives and being allowed to say "no" are behaviours that support this. Women must be able to make decisions about their health and to talk to their partners about the support they need during pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing.

Change can only come with men and women making informed decisions together about reproduction and health. This includes the right of adolescent girls to enjoy a childhood, to play, study and grow up, without any expectation of early marriage.

## • Harmful substances

As mentioned earlier, there are many substances such as alcohol, nicotine, caffeine and drugs that can harm the unborn child, especially in the early weeks of pregnancy when a woman may not even know that she is pregnant. Smoking is harmful not only to the smoker but also to those around him/her, including the mother-to-be and her child. This is not to suggest that every woman who consumes or is exposed to small amounts of these substances will have a difficult pregnancy. However, it is best to avoid exposure to harmful substances.



## BIRTH

Birth is a critical period for the mother and baby. Planning for it and for emergencies should begin early in the pregnancy. Family members should be aware of the signs of labour and know when and how to seek help when labour starts. The mother should have a skilled birth attendant such as a midwife, doctor or nurse, helping her during labour, delivery and immediately following the birth. She should also have access to special care, if problems occur.



## POSTNATAL CARE FOR MOTHER AND BABY

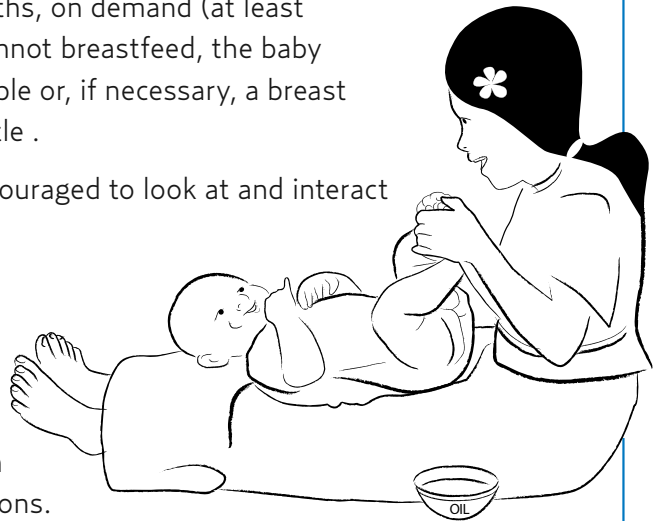
Both mother and baby require immediate care following the birth. They should be checked regularly during the first 24 hours, then during the first week and again six weeks after the birth. More frequent checkups will be necessary if there are complications. The

baby's first vaccinations will be given during this time, although these vary from country to country. Parents should follow the locally recommended schedule.

Caring for a newborn can be joyful and tiring for both parents. Breastfeeding mothers require nutritious food and rest. The family can help by taking over many of the chores she would normally do.

**Having survived the journey into this world, the emphasis is now on helping the baby thrive. This will happen when she or he is:**

- Frequently held and cuddled by the mother, father or other important caregivers.
- Breastfed exclusively in the first six months, on demand (at least every two to three hours). If a woman cannot breastfeed, the baby can be fed expressed breast milk if possible or, if necessary, a breast milk substitute (e.g. formula) from a bottle .
- Given attention and stimulation (e.g. encouraged to look at and interact with things and people) .
- Kept warm, clean and comfortable.
- Given massages.
- Cared for in a clean environment.
- Given regular checkups to monitor health and weight, with recommended vaccinations.



If you know how to massage a baby, and the baby enjoys it, gentle massage can be good for the baby. Massage has many benefits, including stimulating the brain nerves to help food absorption, lowering stress hormones, and building a strong bond between the parent and the child. Fathers can also be involved in massaging a baby. Interacting with the baby in this way allows the parents to build an important relationship with their baby.

**A FATHER'S STORY...**

*When I wake up in the morning I heat water and sweep outside our home since my wife has just given birth and cannot do these things. My wife, Gemma is still in bed with our baby while I prepare breakfast and feed Jamaica and Jan Elaine. When Gemma wakes up she stays with the baby – talking to him and playing with him. She also breastfeeds him and all the while talks to him so he will learn fast.*

*I bathe my two daughters before they go to the centre. My wife joined the Parenting Education Programme and she has been a parent volunteer since 1998 until now... When I come home from work or even when I'm just at home, I carry our children, especially our new baby boy, James. I talk to him and play with him.*

Source: F. de los Angeles-Bautista (2001). *Early Childhood Matters*. No.99.

## BREASTFEEDING

Breast milk is the best food and drink for a baby for the first six months of life, including those born to HIV-infected mothers. No other food or drink, not even water, is needed. Breast milk contains maternal antibodies, which build the child's immune system, and is therefore better for a baby than artificial milk (i.e. formula).

Almost every mother can learn to breastfeed successfully, and frequent breastfeeding causes the production of more milk. If the mother has difficulty breastfeeding, she should talk to a nurse or health worker who may be able help solve breastfeeding problems. If a woman cannot breastfeed her infant, the baby can be fed expressed breast milk or, if necessary, a breast milk substitute from a clean bottle. Care should be taken to ensure that the water used to make the bottles of formula has been boiled and the bottles have been sterilized (put in boiling water for about 5-10 minutes), in order to prevent diarrhoea (caused by drinking contaminated water and through contaminated bottles).

HIV-infected mothers who are taking antiretroviral drugs can also choose to breastfeed, because antiretroviral drugs reduce the possibility of HIV transmission from mother to child (though the risk is not eliminated).

A mother should begin breastfeeding within one hour of the birth. Skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding soon after the birth stimulates production of the mother's milk. The thick yellow milk produced in the first few days after delivery is especially nutritious and helps build the baby's immunity. The mother should breastfeed on demand, or every two to three hours.

If a baby has problems sucking, it is important that he or she is kept close to the mother and is helped to take the breast as often as possible. The baby will need to be given expressed milk from a clean cup and spoon.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that breastfeeding should continue for at least six months, and to get the maximum benefits of breast milk breastfeeding should continue up to two years of age and beyond.

At six months of age, along with breast milk, babies require nutritious supplementary solid foods such as mashed vegetables with rice, and boiled, peeled and mashed fruits (or other recommended local food), at least five times a day, as well as clean drinking water.



## BIRTH REGISTRATION

Registration of the birth is vital to establish the legal existence of the child. Under International Law, every child – regardless of citizenship status – is entitled to a birth certificate. Without a birth certificate the child has no recognised legal existence or identity. Without this legal recognition, a person may not have access to health care or education or the basic rights of citizens or residents. Birth registration is essential for combating statelessness, which makes children particularly vulnerable to trafficking and other forms of exploitation. The parents should register the birth of their child as soon as possible after the birth.



## LEARNING TO LOVE

A newborn baby is truly remarkable! At birth, body systems are in place and ready to function independently – breathing, sucking and eliminating body waste. Newborns can hear and respond to different sounds, especially the mother’s voice. They can see, although in a limited way. They respond to touch and they are ready to learn.

Perhaps the most important learning in the first few months is learning to love. While parents may fall in love with their baby at birth, it takes a baby a few months to begin developing this loving feeling, or bond, with the parents. The bond is a feeling of closeness between the baby and parent and continues to develop during the first two years of life. This is a child’s first relationship and is critical for all other relationships that he or she will form throughout life. The trust and security babies develop through this relationship is important for all areas of development. It gives them the confidence later on to explore, play with other children and go to places, such as preschool, without their parents.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO?

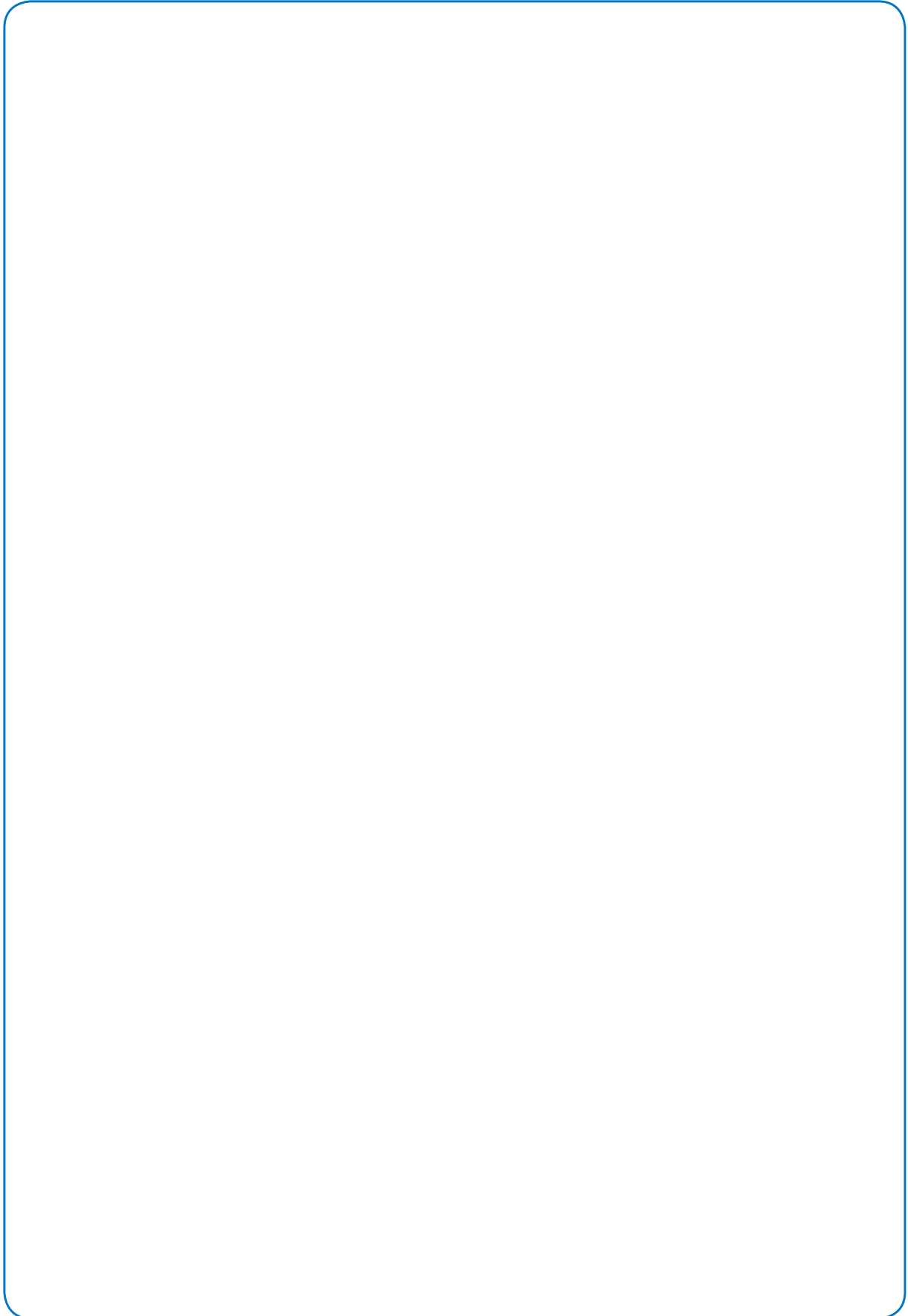
- Give all adolescent boys and girls essential information on reproduction and the risks of pregnancy before 18 years.
- Talk to your husband or wife about reproduction and related issues. How many children do you want and when? What do women want men to know? What information would men like to have to better support women? What is the role of the mother? What is the role of the father?
- Quit smoking, alcohol and substance abuse.
- Share information and support others in the community who require help.
- Give babies lots of love, attention and stimulation:
  - Hold and cuddle them often when they are awake.
  - Talk and sing to them.
  - Respond to their cries so they learn that help is always there.
  - Make eye-to-eye contact.
  - Smile, make faces or stick out your tongue (even very young babies will try to imitate). You can also imitate their sounds and faces.
  - Hang brightly-coloured or black-and-white mobiles or toys 25 to 40 centimetres from the baby’s face to encourage movement of the eyes. Change these often to continue to stimulate the baby’s mind.
  - Read aloud from anything, even this booklet.
  - Tell stories, sing songs, share prayers. Babies will enjoy hearing your voice and being close to you. Children also begin to understand and learn language long before they can speak.

## Resources and services available in the community

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## MY STORY...



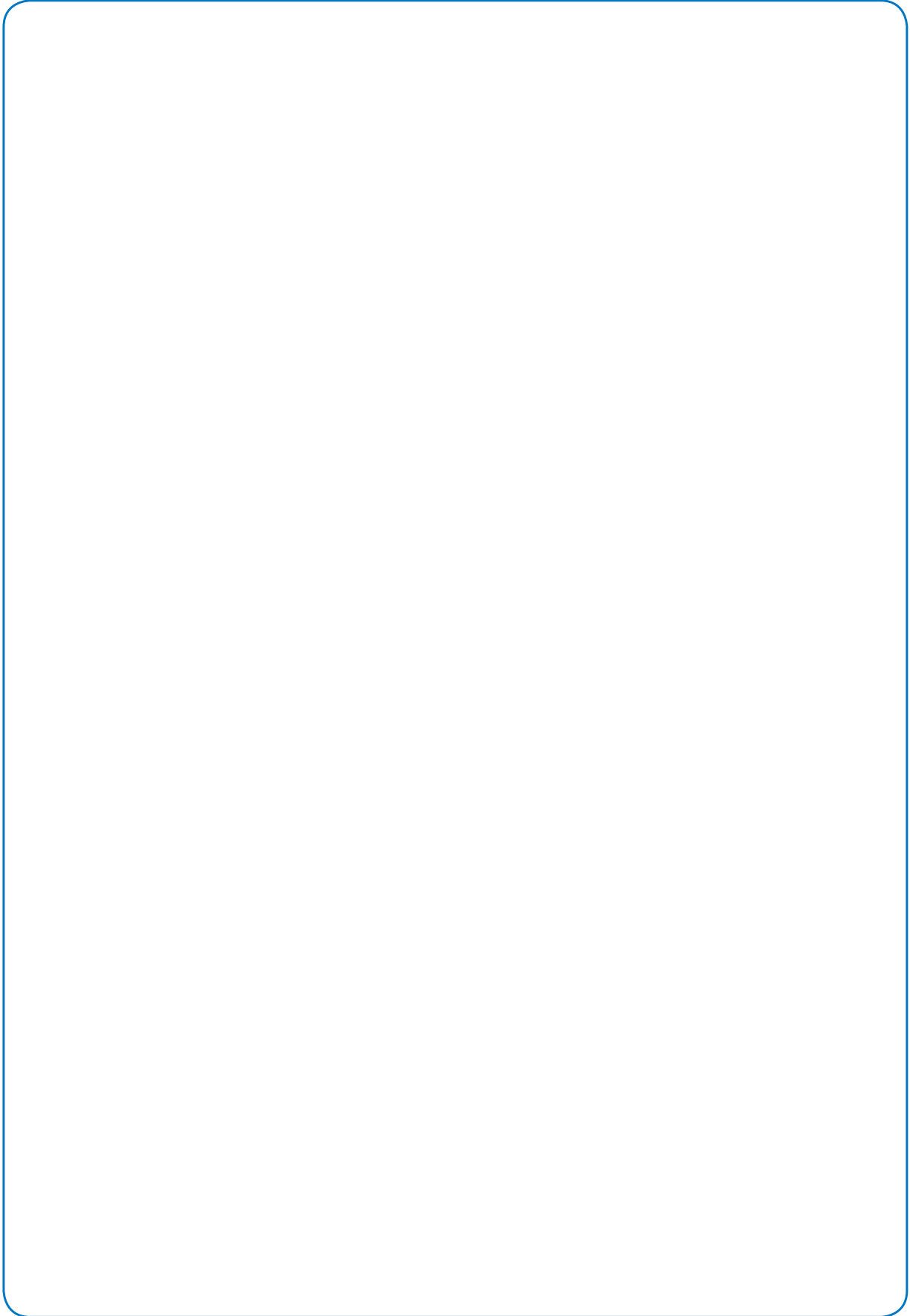


## Activity Sheet

WHAT I KNOW	WHAT I WANT TO KNOW	WHAT I HAVE LEARNED



## NOTES



· **Booklet 2: A Child is Born**

· The focus in this booklet is on pregnancy and on  
· the health and care of the mother and baby before,  
· during and after the birth. Emphasis is placed on the  
· importance of bonding between mother and baby,  
· beginning with breastfeeding.



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# The Developing Child

Booklet 3



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# The Developing Child

**All babies come into the world programmed and ready for learning. By the age of two or three, most will be showing all the characteristics that make us human – walking, talking, thinking, socialising, showing emotions and solving problems. It is a remarkable achievement in such a short time. At no other time in life will they learn so quickly.**

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS support this development when they give babies and young children affection, attention and stimulation, as well as good nutrition, proper health care and protection. Parents, their communities and governments have a responsibility to ensure that these rights are met for all children regardless of sex, language, ethnicity, ability or other differences.

In this booklet we look at how children grow and develop from birth through to 8 years of age. Understanding what happens as a child grows and develops, helps adults to be more effective parents and caregivers. We also offer some suggestions for how parents and other caregivers can support this development.

## WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

Development refers to the changes that human beings experience throughout life. Child development is about changes that occur between conception and adolescence. We talk of mental, physical, language, social and emotional development because changes occur in all of these areas.

The brain is behind all learning and development. It allows a child to walk, eat, speak, laugh and think. By birth, the structure of the brain is in place but it requires human interaction and stimulation to make it work effectively.

Babies learn about the world through their senses: hearing, touch, taste, smell and vision. Every sensory experience helps to make connections between the billions of cells that are in the brain, and so helps the baby to learn. For example, a parent talks to the baby when she or he picks up the baby, and thus supports the baby's hearing. Repetition reinforces the connection so that the baby soon learns to recognize the parent's voice.

Learning continues throughout life. However, there are sensitive periods, especially for vision, hearing and language development. These are periods when the brain is like a huge sponge and is able to soak up new information easily. Think, for example, of how easily and rapidly young children learn their first language.

The period between birth and about 5 years of age is sensitive for all areas of child development. Positive experiences in these years give the child the best chance for healthy lifelong development. On the other hand, poor nutrition, stress, negative experiences and lack of stimulation during these years have a serious effect on a child's development.



## MILESTONES

Milestones are points in a child's development that are normally achieved within a particular age range, including sitting, crawling, standing, walking and saying their first words. Being aware of milestones helps parents know what to expect and when to seek help if their child is not developing as expected. However, the age at which children reach a particular milestone, such as crawling, varies greatly. A child's development is influenced by many things, including the circumstances in which they live and the opportunities children have to practice new skills. Cultural beliefs and practices also make a difference. For example, if parents do not allow a child to try to feed itself (with a spoon), then the child is likely to develop self-help skills later than usual.

There are many small steps along the way to achieving all major milestones. Each new skill builds on a previous one. For example, a baby must be able to roll over before he or she can sit, and be able to sit before he or she can crawl or stand. The sequence of this development is more important than the child's actual age. Look at the table on the next page. It shows some important physical milestones on the way to walking and gives the age when most babies develop each skill. Notice the great range of ages for each skill. Try filling in the column for your baby or a baby you know.

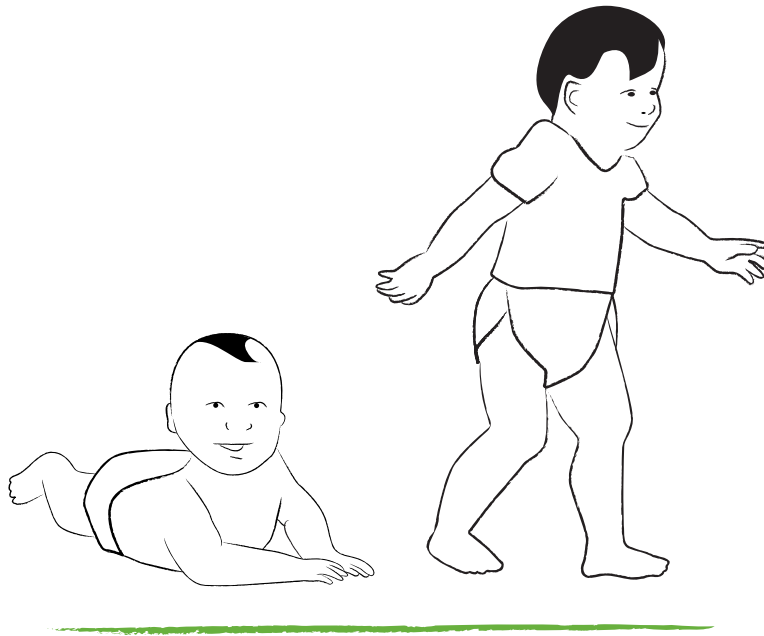







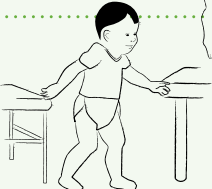
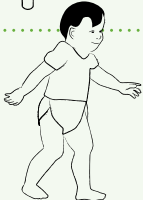


Table: Milestones and age range for reaching them

PHYSICAL MILESTONES	AGE RANGE DURING WHICH MOST HEALTHY BABIES DEVELOP THIS SKILL	AT WHAT AGE COULD YOUR BABY OR A BABY YOU KNOW DO THIS?
Lift head and upper body on arms when lying on floor 	<b>1-4 months</b>	
Sit with support, keeping head steady 	<b>3-5 months</b>	
Roll from stomach to back 	<b>4- 6 months</b>	
Sit without support 	<b>5-8 months</b>	
Pull self to standing position 	<b>5-12 months</b>	
Crawl 	<b>9-11 months</b>	
Stand alone 	<b>9-16 months</b>	
Walk holding onto something 	<b>8-13 months</b>	
Walk alone 	<b>9-17 months</b>	

Now let's look at some of the things babies and young children can do. Sharing your local knowledge is important, so you can add your own ideas through writing or drawing. For example, if most babies in your community do not walk until about 18 months of age, discuss this and try to determine the reasons for it. Talking together with others in your community can also help you, as parents, to learn new ways of doing things and improve your practices.

## Look what I can do...

### BY 1 MONTH I CAN...

- **Suckle my mother's breast**
- **Turn my head towards a hand that strokes my cheek or mouth**
- **Communicate and show my emotions in many different ways – crying, turning away, crinkling my nose, frowning my brow...**
- **Hear very well. I like music and voices, especially my mother's voice**
- **See things if they are close**
- **Bring both my hands to my mouth**

Breastfeed me often until I am 6 months old. I don't need any other food. Touch and cuddle me a lot.



Hang mobile toys or interesting things close to my face.



Talk, sing and read to me. Look at me in the eye and pull faces.

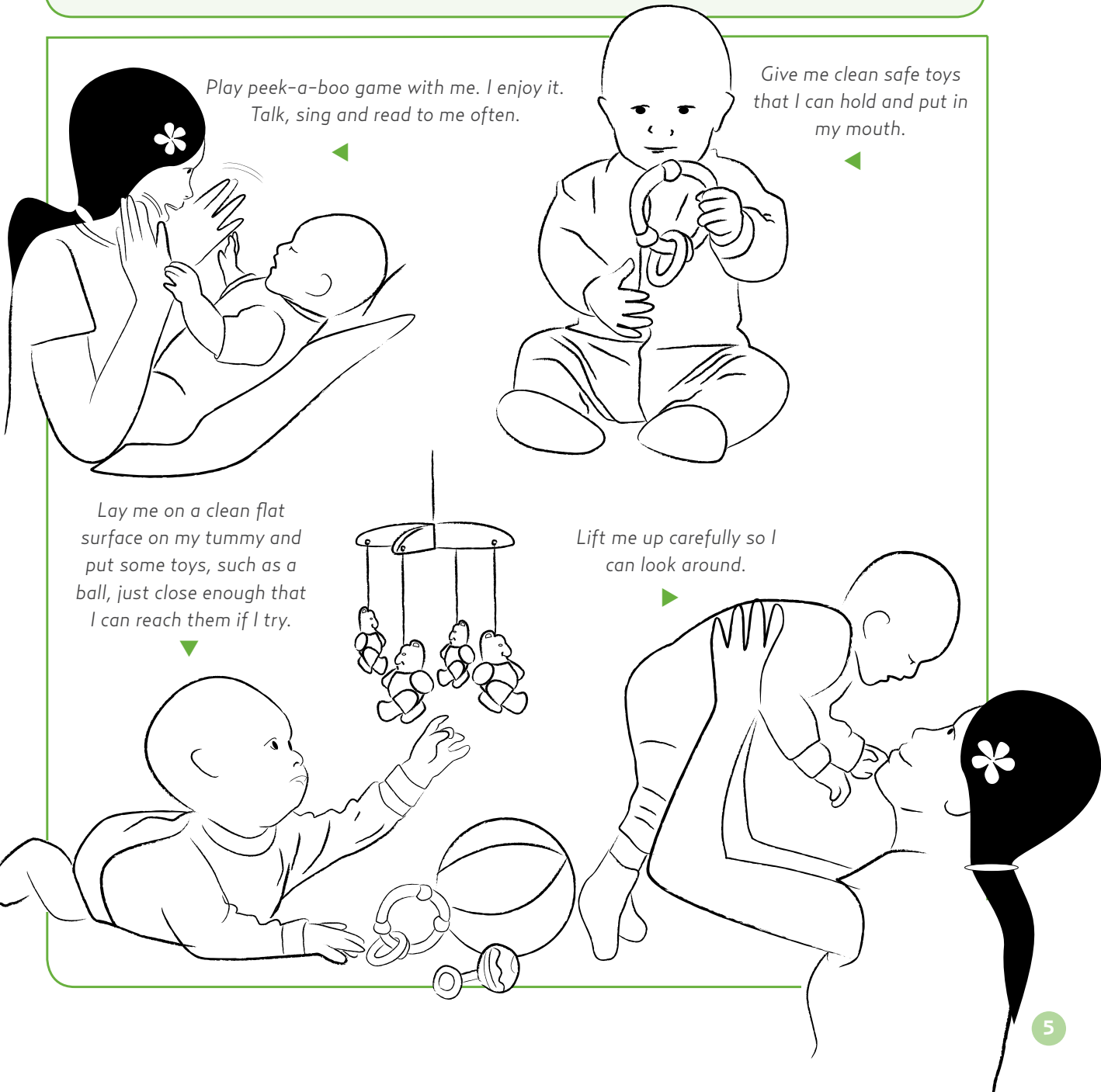


Massage me gently with or without oil.



BY 6 MONTHS I CAN...

- Lift my head and upper body when lying on my stomach
- Follow people with my eyes
- Reach for dangling objects
- Grasp and shake objects
- Roll both ways
- Sit if I have support
- Explore objects with my hands and mouth
- Imitate some sounds and a lot of facial expressions
- Make lots of sounds. I can coo, gurgle, squeal and laugh
- Recognize my name when I hear it
- Smile at myself in a mirror



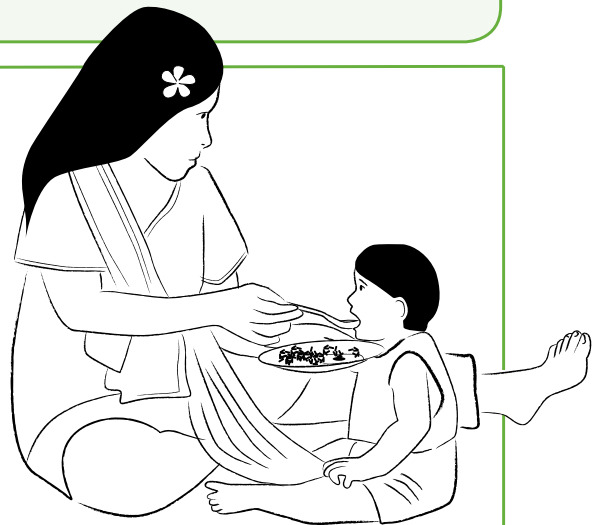
BY 12 MONTHS I CAN...

- Sit without support
- Crawl on my hands and knees and pull myself up to standing
- Take a few steps if I can hold onto someone
- Try to imitate words and sounds
- Enjoy playing little games and clapping
- Follow simple requests
- Repeat sounds and gestures to get attention. I love attention!
- Pick up things with my thumb and one finger. I enjoy picking up and dropping things
- Try to feed myself if you let me
- Learn a lot by putting things in my mouth

Give me some things to push and pull or roll. The cans from the cupboard are great toys.



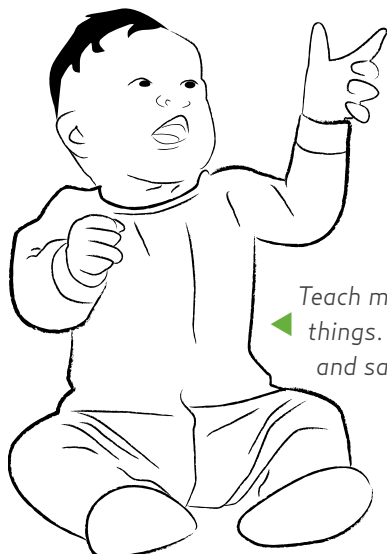
Keep breastfeeding me but now I need nutritious solid food 3 or 4 times a day. Don't force me if I don't want to eat.



Play games with me; talk, sing and read to me. If I start a game just follow me. I'm the leader!



Teach me the names of things. Point to them and say their name.



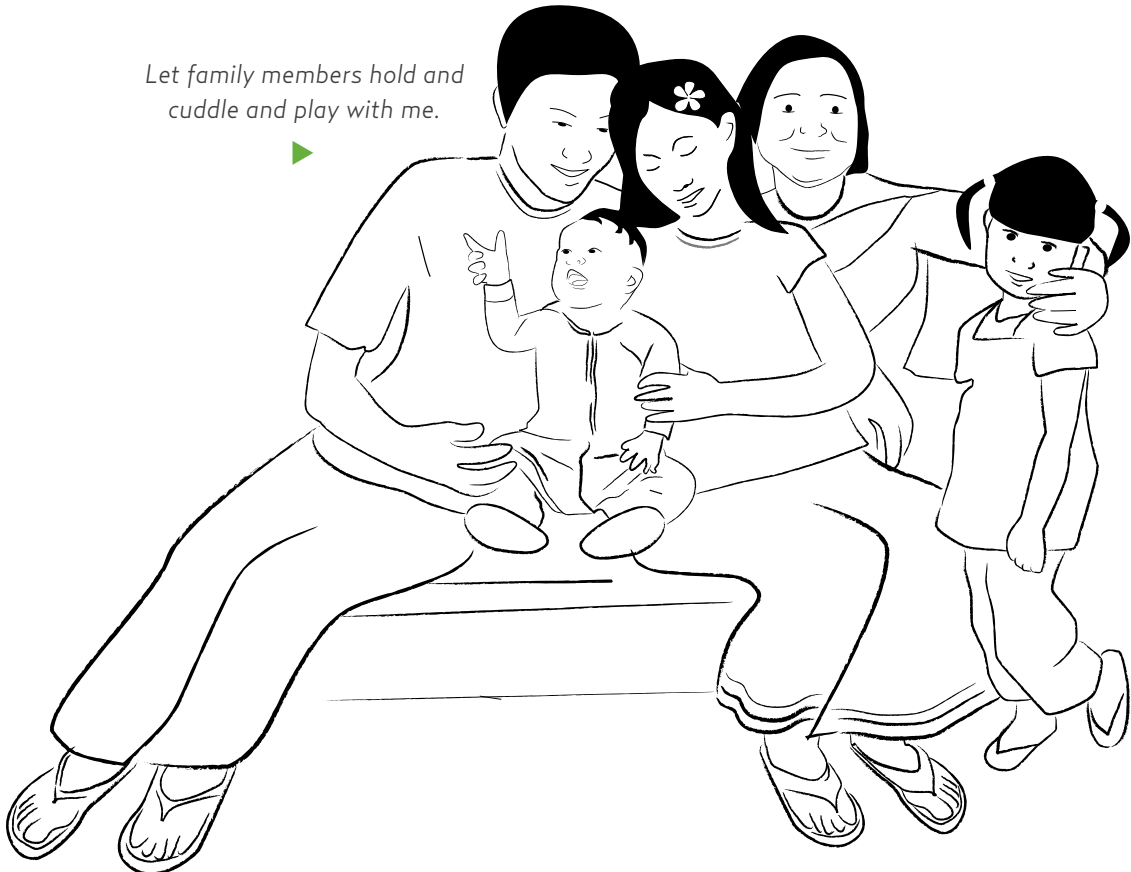
## BY 12 MONTHS I CAN...

*I enjoy filling up containers with water/sand/small toys and then emptying them. Anything will do as long as it's safe. Give me containers and some things to put in them.*



*Keep me clean and safe because once I can move I'll be into everything! You can start teaching me how to wash my hands. Make sure I've had all my vaccinations too.*

*Let family members hold and cuddle and play with me.*





**MOVING ON: THE CHILD FROM 2 TO 5 YEARS**

Being able to walk and talk gives two-year-olds enormous opportunities for learning. They are always busy, full of energy and curiosity. Although they still depend a great deal on adults, they want to do things for themselves, and may get very frustrated when they cannot. This can cause outbursts of anger (tantrums). In many cultures, 'no' becomes a popular word as young children challenge adults and try to assert themselves. Being able to do things for themselves is important for all young children although the extent to which it is allowed in a culture may vary. Nevertheless, it is important that children be able to take care of their personal needs before going to school, or even to kindergarten. By encouraging independence, parents and caregivers are helping children get ready for school and later life.

Three, four and five-year-olds build on the many skills they have been developing since birth. If they have had the necessary care, support and stimulation in the beginning years, they now display increasing creativity, language and thinking skills that will extend their learning in all areas of development. Talking to them is like looking through a window into their brains. You can see them trying to make sense of the world as they ask questions; for example, Why do leaves fall off the trees? Why do birds have feathers? Why is the water dirty? What does the sun do at night? Why? What? How? Try to give simple, honest answers. It helps them learn. This is a great time for teaching hygiene practices as children can now accept there is a reason for important habits such as washing hands.

In these years, children are also developing more control over their emotions. They have more social skills and enjoy playing with other children. Encouraging play in these years is the best way forward as it supports learning in all areas of development.

**The first years of a child's life go by very quickly. So touch, talk, read, smile, sing, count and play with your children. It does more than make both of you feel good. It helps a child's brain develop and nourishes the child's potential for a lifetime.**

Source: Brotherson, 2005

BY 2 YEARS OF AGE I CAN...

- Walk alone, climb and run
- Point to and name familiar objects or pictures when someone asks me to
- Put two or more words together when talking
- Follow simple instructions
- Scribble if I'm given a pencil or crayon. I can hold it with my fist
- Enjoy simple stories and songs
- Imitate the behaviour of others
- Begin to feed and dress myself
- Help with household chores and pretend play about these
- Get very frustrated sometimes and refuse to do things. I love saying 'no!'



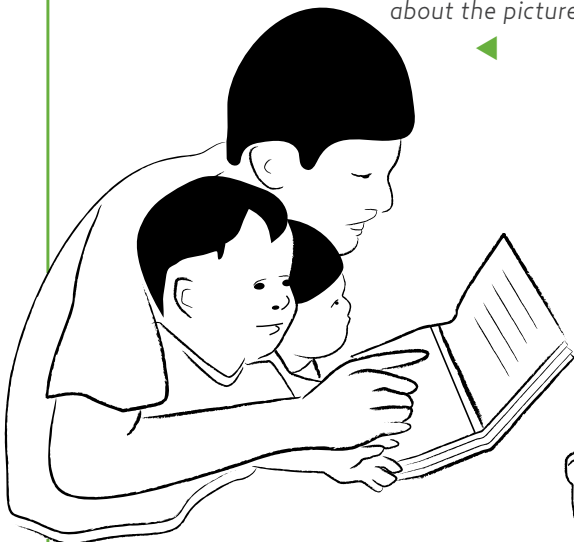
Teach me to keep away from dangerous places and things.

Tell me the rules, but keep them simple. Praise me when I try to do the right thing. It's a bit hard sometimes.

Give me tools for drawing and toys for pretending. These are like food for my busy brain!



Read and look at books with me and talk about the pictures.



Give me water and sand containers for pouring and filling.

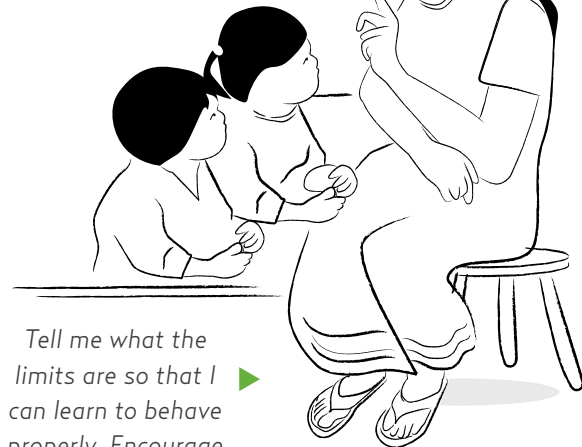


BY 3 YEARS OF AGE I CAN...

- Walk, run, climb, kick and jump easily
- Say my name and age
- Match and name some colours
- Use number words, although I don't understand numbers yet
- Ask and answer questions; I ask lots of questions
- Recite rhymes, sing simple songs
- Use make-believe or pretend objects when I play
- Feed myself
- Show my affection for others
- Wash and dry my hands; brush my teeth but with some help
- Control my bladder most of the time. What a relief!
- Listen carefully to stories and make comments



Let me play often with other children and give us time each day to have lots of exercise.



Tell me what the limits are so that I can learn to behave properly. Encourage me and always love me – even if I do the wrong thing sometimes.

Be patient. Please listen carefully to me and answer my questions. Give me simple answers that I understand.



Tell me stories; teach me rhymes and songs.

Provide play materials that encourage me to pretend and be creative.



BY 5 YEARS OF AGE I CAN...

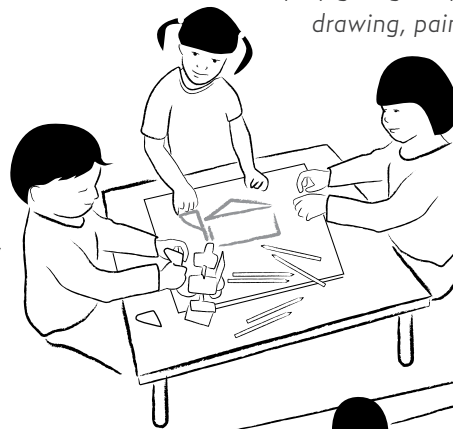
- Move in a coordinated way
- Speak in sentences and use many different words in my own language
- Speak clearly; even most strangers can now understand me
- Understand opposites (e.g., fat/thin, tall/short)
- Hold a crayon or pencil between my thumb and first two fingers. It's important that I get this right before I go to school
- Use either the right or left hand most of the time
- Play with other children and make friends. Other children like me even though we sometimes argue
- Complete a simple task and not give up
- Ask many questions
- Count 5-10 objects
- Dress myself without help
- Use the toilet or latrine without help. I try to remember to wash my hands afterwards



Listen to me and answer my questions. Have conversations with me.



I'm getting interested in writing. You can help by giving me pencils and crayons for drawing, painting and writing.



If there's a playgroup or kindergarten nearby please take me regularly. I learn so much by playing with other children.



Read to me every day, play games, sing and tell me stories.

Provide toys and games to help me learn about numbers, letters and other important ideas. Blocks are really important. We can make these ourselves.



**OFF TO SCHOOL !**

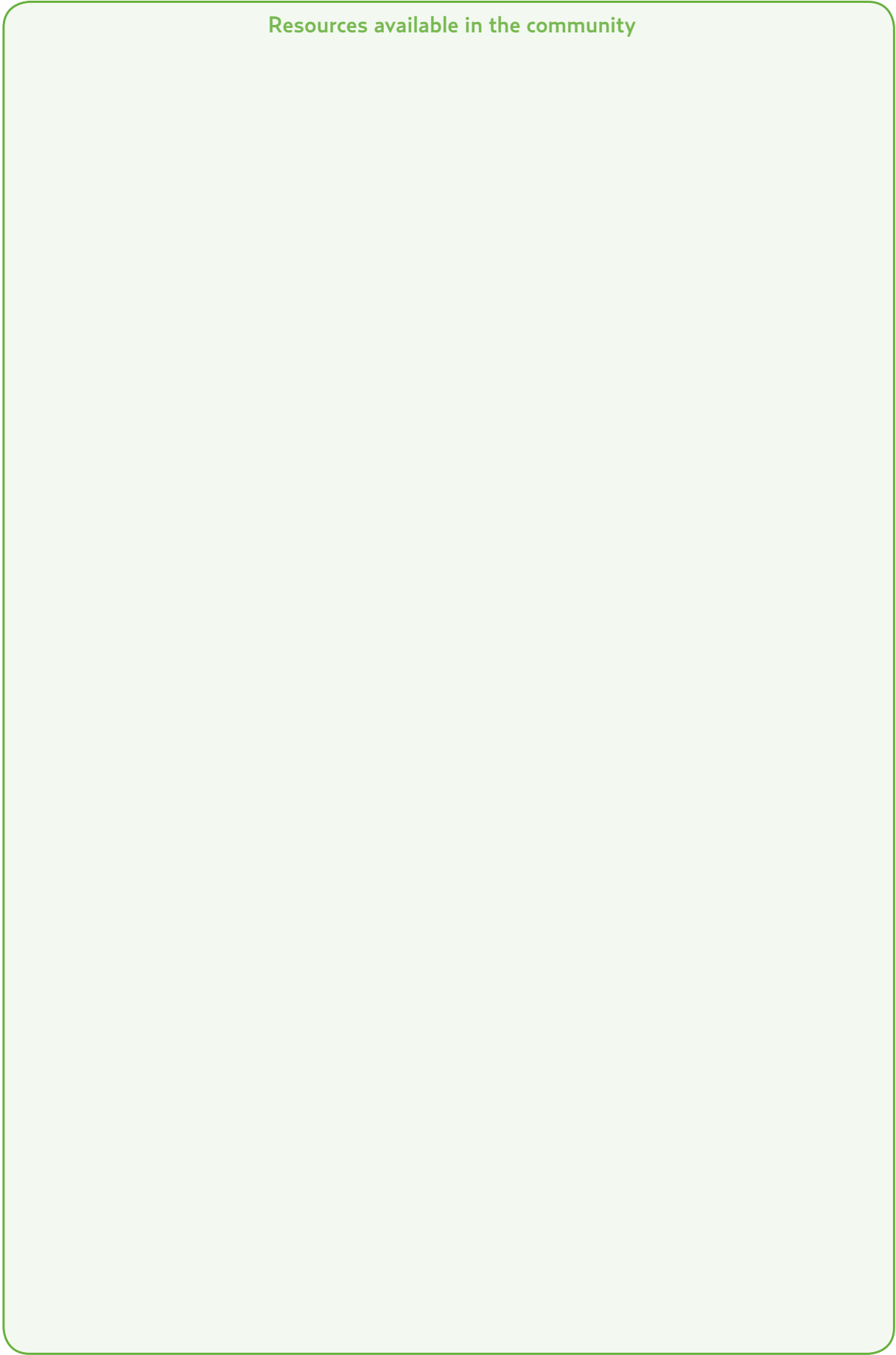
Going to school is an important milestone in children's development and should not be delayed without a very good reason. All children should be enrolled in school at the age recommended in their country and should attend regularly. Children who have been given affection, attention, stimulation and proper care in the first five years will be ready for school. They will continue to grow and develop if teachers provide them with learning opportunities that are child-centred, that build on their strengths and on all the developments that have already taken place.

**Parents and caregivers remain the most important people in children's lives and can help by doing the following things:**

- **Being good role models**
- **Showing interest in the school and getting involved**
- **Spending time with their children**
- **Talking and listening to them**
- **Playing games and doing activities together**
- **Encouraging children to express their feelings, opinions and beliefs**
- **Encouraging children to play with friends and get involved in activities such as sports outside school**
- **Setting clear limits for behaviour and acknowledging positive behaviour**



**Resources available in the community**





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## NOTES

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a thin green border, occupying most of the page below the 'NOTES' header. It is intended for the user to write their notes.

: **Booklet 3: The Developing Child**

: The development of the brain and a child's learning and  
: development is explained in this booklet. Expectations  
: for development at various ages are outlined, together  
: with suggestions for ways parents can help their  
: children to reach their developmental potential.



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# Health and Nutrition

Booklet 4



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# Health and Nutrition

All parents want their children to be healthy. Healthy children are happy and active; they do well at school, and are able to become an active part of their community. Keeping children healthy can be difficult for some families, however, especially in communities where drinking water is dirty, or sanitation is poor, or where people do not have good hygiene practices. Children can catch serious diseases in such conditions. Many die or become disabled. Most of these diseases are preventable, however, if families and communities take practical, low-cost actions. In this booklet we look at the main risks for babies and young children's health, their causes and how to prevent them. We also consider how to teach children practices that will keep them safe and healthy both now and in the future.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN RISKS FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH?

### • *In the first month*

The health of a mother and her unborn child depends a lot on the care she receives from the family and the community. Planning for the birth, as well as having a skilled and trained birth attendant during labour, delivery and immediately following the birth, will help strengthen the likelihood of a baby being born healthy. The period of greatest risk is the first month of a child's life, when the baby is highly susceptible to infections, especially in the case of children born prematurely. Both mother and baby require clean surroundings, nutritious food and regular checkups. For a baby, nutritious food means nothing but breast milk, beginning in the first hour after birth.

### • *Between 1 month and 5 years of age*

Children under 5 continue to be at risk for many diseases and conditions including:

- **Pneumonia or other acute respiratory diseases**
- **Diarrhoea**
- **Malaria and dengue fever**
- **Measles**
- **HIV**
- **Malnutrition**



Take a few moments now to think about the health of your children. What diseases are common amongst babies and young children in your community? What are some of your worries about the health of your children? You can write a few notes below if you want to.

.....

.....

.....

.....

**MAJOR DISEASES AND THEIR PREVENTION**

• **Pneumonia**

Pneumonia is a form of acute respiratory infection that affects the lungs. Worldwide, it is the leading cause of death in children under 5 years of age. It is usually caused by a bacterial infection but can also be caused by other infectious agents, including viruses and fungi.

*Pneumonia can be spread through:*

- **Coughing and sneezing**

Children whose immune systems are weak are at a higher risk of developing pneumonia. A child’s immune system can be weakened by malnutrition, HIV infection or by pre-existing illnesses such as measles.

Some environmental factors can also increase a child’s likelihood of getting pneumonia; these include indoor air pollution caused by cooking and heating with fuel such as wood or dung; crowded living conditions; and exposure to tobacco smoke.

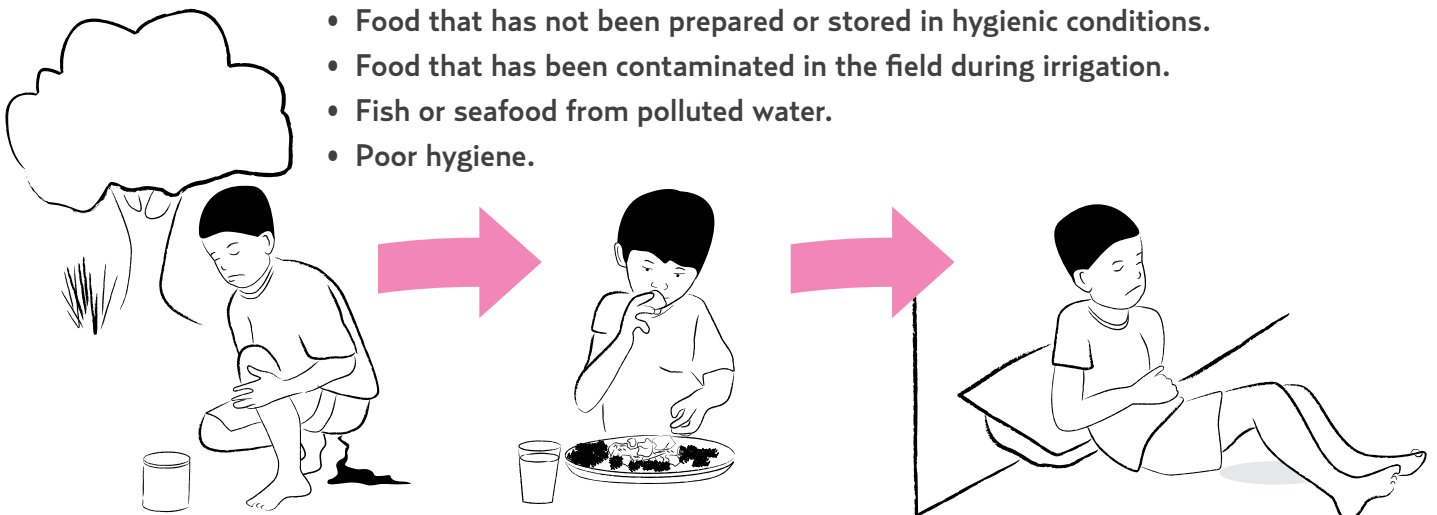
Babies with pneumonia may be unable to eat or drink and may become unconscious and experience hypothermia (a condition in which the body temperature falls below the normal temperature) and convulsions (a condition involving uncontrolled shaking of the body).



• **Diarrhoea**

Diarrhoea is a common cause of sickness and death in young children. It can be caused by:

- **Water that has been contaminated by human or animal faeces.**
- **Food that has not been prepared or stored in hygienic conditions.**
- **Food that has been contaminated in the field during irrigation.**
- **Fish or seafood from polluted water.**
- **Poor hygiene.**



*A child eating with unwashed hands after defaecating and therefore falling sick.*

When a child has diarrhoea, he or she can lose fluids in the body. Dehydration can occur if these fluids are not replaced.

Severe diarrhoea can be life-threatening among children who are malnourished or who have a weak immune system. Each bout of diarrhoea makes them weaker. Inversely, diarrhoea can also cause malnutrition in children.

To treat diarrhoea, parents should give the affected child more fluids than usual, including oral rehydration salts (ORS) to replace lost fluids. ORS is a mixture of water, salt and sugar that can be prepared easily at home by mixing a handful of sugar and half a teaspoon of salt in one litre of clean, boiled water. Zinc supplements will speed up recovery. Parents should continue to feed their children nutritious food, including breast milk, while they are sick and they should consult a health worker if there are signs of dehydration.

### • Malaria

Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease. Symptoms include fever, headache and loss of appetite.

Malarial infection among children contributes to anaemia (a sickness in which blood is not able to carry sufficient oxygen around the body), which is a major cause of poor growth and development. Malarial infection during pregnancy can lead to anaemia and other illnesses in the mother, and to low birth weight among newborn babies.

*Malaria is both preventable and treatable. It can be prevented by:*

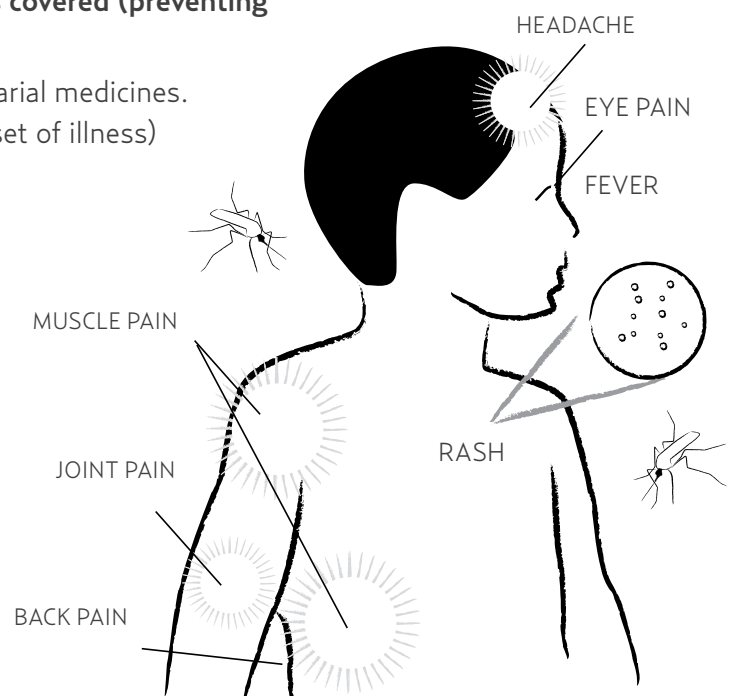
- **Sleeping under insecticide-treated mosquito nets.**
- **Spraying of mosquito repellent indoors.**
- **Eradicating mosquito breeding sites: this involves ensuring there is no rubbish, such as empty cans, lying around outside that can collect stagnant water (where mosquitoes breed), and keeping water storage containers covered (preventing mosquitoes from breeding in them).**

Malaria can be treated with various anti-malarial medicines. Prompt treatment (within one day of the onset of illness) can reduce the risk of death.

### • Dengue

Dengue is another mosquito-borne infection that can cause serious illness and death. The symptoms include a fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle and joint pains and a skin rash.

Dengue can be prevented using the same methods for preventing malaria (described above). There is no treatment for dengue, although medical care can save the lives of those with the more serious dengue haemorrhagic fever.



## • Measles

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that remains one of the leading causes of death among children globally. Most measles-related deaths are caused by complications including blindness, encephalitis (an infection that causes brain swelling), severe diarrhoea and related dehydration, ear infections, or severe respiratory infections such as pneumonia.

Severe measles is more likely among malnourished young children, especially those suffering from vitamin A deficiency, and among children whose immune systems have been weakened by HIV infection or other diseases.

*Measles is spread through:*

- coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact
- touching infected nasal or throat secretions

Measles can be prevented through immunization. There is a safe and effective vaccine against measles that has been in use for over 40 years. It is inexpensive and is often included with rubella (German measles) and mumps vaccines.

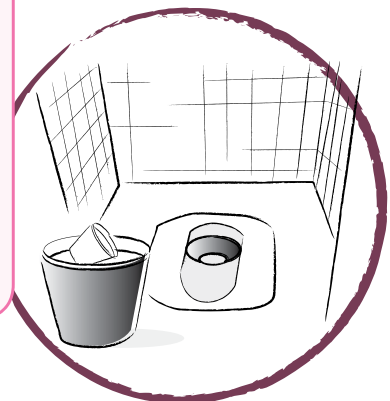
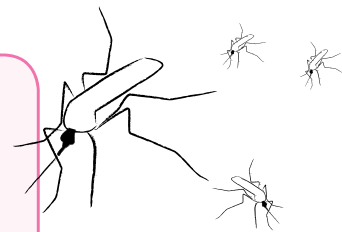
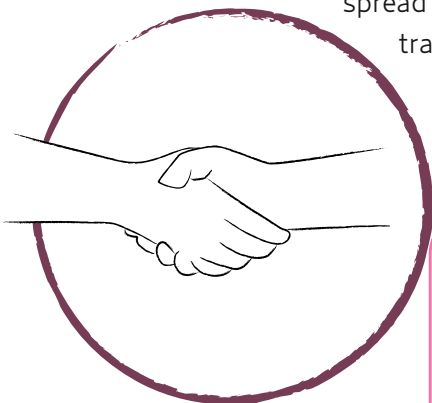
There is no treatment that will kill the measles virus, so treatment focuses on relief of symptoms. In countries in which malnutrition is common and children may be vitamin A deficient, children who are diagnosed with measles should receive two doses of vitamin A supplements, given 24 hours apart, to help prevent eye damage and blindness.

## • HIV and AIDS

HIV stands for **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus. The virus attacks the cells in the body that fight off infection and keep the body healthy. HIV is transmitted through contact with the blood, semen, vaginal fluid or breast milk of someone infected with HIV. It is most commonly spread through unprotected sex (i.e. sex without condoms), but can also be transmitted through the use of contaminated needles (typically when injecting drugs), blood transfusions with contaminated blood, or from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

**HIV CANNOT BE SPREAD BY...**

- mosquitoes
- sharing eating utensils or drinking from the same glass as someone with HIV
- hugging, kissing or shaking hands with someone with HIV
- being in contact with saliva, tears, sweat or urine of someone with HIV



When HIV has damaged a person's immune system, they are diagnosed with **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)**. If left untreated, most people with HIV infection do eventually develop AIDS, but not always.

There is no cure for HIV or AIDS, but antiretroviral drugs can delay the progression of the disease, reduce disability, improve quality of life and increase life expectancy.

In cases in which a pregnant woman has HIV, the risk of transmission from mother to child can be greatly reduced by giving the woman antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy, during delivery and during breastfeeding (if breastfeeding). This should be coupled with antiretroviral therapy for the infant(s) from birth or as soon as possible thereafter until four to six weeks of age.

By taking antiretroviral drugs, HIV-infected mothers can breastfeed with a low risk of transmitting the virus. Where breastfeeding protected with antiretrovirals is supported, breastfeeding should be exclusive (only breast milk, with no addition of water or food) for the first six months of life and can be safely continued up to one year with complementary feeding. Mixed feeding at an early age (giving both breast milk and other liquids, such as water or formula, and/or food) increases the risk of passing the infection on to the child.

When antiretroviral drugs are not available or accessible (due to cost or other reasons), HIV-infected mothers can instead feed their children with a milk substitute (i.e. formula, using boiled water). Safe water and sanitation must be assured at the household level and in the community to avoid risk of malnutrition, diarrhoea and other diseases.

### • Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease that is transmitted through bites or scratches from an infected domestic or wild animal, such as a dog, cat or bat.

Rabies can be prevented among children by teaching them to avoid contact with animals (e.g. other people's pets or stray dogs) and by vaccinating and neutering your own dogs and cats.



Rabies can be fatal without proper treatment. If a child is bitten by an animal, wash the wound immediately, for a minimum of 15 minutes, with soap and water or iodine, then take the child to a hospital. Rabies can be treated with medicine if the treatment is given within a few hours after contact with a suspect rabid animal. A safe, effective vaccine also exists and is recommended for people likely to be exposed to rabies.

### • Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a condition that can be caused by not consuming enough nutritious food, not being able to absorb the nutrients necessary to stay healthy, or by getting too much food. Malnutrition is harmful because a child with malnutrition can pick up infections easily. In addition, severe malnutrition can lead to permanent brain damage. Furthermore, hungry and malnourished children are less active; they may be less interested in playing with other children and less able to concentrate on learning activities. They are also more likely to miss school, fall behind and drop out.

In some cultures, girls receive less food than boys. This is a denial of the girl child's rights. As mentioned in the "*Caring for Children*" booklet in this Guidebook, all children have the right to adequate nutrition.

Children with disabilities may need special attention to make sure they get enough nutritious food. Depending on their condition, they may need help with eating and drinking. If this is a concern for you, talk to a health worker or to other parents who have a child with disabilities. Together you may be able to find solutions to your problems.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Mental disorders affect the way people think, feel and act. Like adults, children can also have such disorders. Disorders can be caused by genetic abnormalities, chemical imbalances in the body, or damage to the central nervous system.

### OTHER FACTORS PUTTING CHILDREN AT RISK OF DEVELOPING MENTAL DISORDERS

- **physical or sexual abuse**
- **stress and hardships, such as chronic poverty or discrimination**
- **political and natural disasters that affect a child directly and cause prolonged distress**
- **exposure to harmful chemicals in the air or soil**
- **experiencing a loss through death or broken relationships**

Mental illness is a sickness and, as like any other sickness, it needs to be treated. Treatment involves giving a child help and support, preferably from a counsellor or health worker experienced in mental health. Parents can also help by talking to their children and by encouraging them to express their feelings through art, music, dance and other expressive and play activities. These activities can help the child recover from pain and stress, and may prevent long-term damage to the child's development.

## KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY

Keeping your child healthy involves a combination of immunization, good nutrition and hygienic practices.

### • Immunization

Immunization is a safe and effective way of preventing and controlling many diseases. Children should complete a full course of immunizations according to the schedule recommended in their country. This will likely include vaccinations against Hepatitis B, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps and rubella, and Hib (a type of flu vaccine that prevents meningitis and throat infections).

Although the child may experience a little pain and discomfort from the injection, and sometimes a fever following a vaccination, the benefits far outweigh these side-effects. Parents who have concerns about vaccinating their children should talk to their community health worker.

## • Good food, good health

Good nutrition, together with nurture and love, is the key to a child's healthy growth and development. Children who do not have enough nutritious food are more vulnerable to diseases, and may die or be disabled as a result. Children who eat well are generally healthy and can fight off diseases or recover quickly when they do get sick.

### BABIES

Breast milk contains all the nutrients a baby needs, is clean and has antibodies that protect children against infections. Almost every mother can learn to breastfeed successfully, and frequent breastfeeding stimulates the body to produce more milk. If a woman cannot breastfeed, the baby can be fed expressed breast milk or, if necessary, a breast milk substitute (i.e. formula) from a clean bottle.

If a mother has HIV, she can pass the virus to her baby during pregnancy, delivery, or through her breast milk. As noted above, however, antiretroviral drugs can greatly reduce the risk of her passing on HIV through breastfeeding. Taking antiretroviral drugs and breastfeeding improves the chances of her baby remaining healthy and free of HIV infection, while providing her baby with the best nutrition and protection from diseases. Women with HIV should get advice from a health worker.



In the first six months of life, babies should be exclusively breastfed or bottle fed (in case mother cannot breast feed). From six months onwards, children should receive freshly-prepared, nutritious food in addition to breast milk or formula. Vitamin supplements may also be encouraged by your community health worker to overcome any deficiencies and improve your child's health.

Small stomachs need food often. In the first year, feed children five times a day, with healthy snacks in between.



## YOUNG CHILDREN

Children should eat a variety of food from the four main food groups:

1. **Vegetables and fruits,**
2. **Grains (rice, bread, cereals, etc.),**
3. **Dairy products (milk, yoghurt, cheese, etc) and**
4. **Protein (eggs, beans, meat, pulses, and fish).**

Vegetables, fruits and grains should make up the majority of a child's food intake, with smaller proportions of dairy products and protein. Children should not eat only sugary food except on special occasions such as festivals, birthdays or family celebrations, because such food has no nutritional value and is bad for children's health. Eating sweet food often causes tooth decay.

Give children small servings of a variety of food and offer new food regularly to enable your children to develop a taste for a wide range of food. If a child rejects something they are offered (e.g. spinach), do not get annoyed and do not force them to eat it, simply offer them something else nutritious and try again another day with the type of food that was rejected. If they try it often enough, they will develop a taste for it. If a child refuses every type of food you offer them, they either are not hungry or are not well.

Young children should mainly drink water or milk. They can also drink fruit juice that has been diluted with water, but only in small amounts (one glass) per day as fruit juice contains sugar and is bad for their teeth. Tea and coffee are unsuitable for young children.

Children between 1 and 5 years of age should be given healthy snacks in between meals. For example fresh fruit and raw vegetables such as carrots which have been cut into pieces.



## SAFE HYGIENE PRACTICES

Good sanitation and hygiene can prevent many diseases. The following practices should become habits for everyone in the family and community:

### • Wash hands with soap

Many common infectious diseases, such as diarrhoea, are spread through dirty hands. Washing hands with soap can reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by half and greatly reduces the risk of respiratory infections such as pneumonia, as well as other diseases, including eye diseases such as trachoma. Help children develop the habit of washing their hands with soap before eating and after going to the toilet.

## WHAT TO DO

### Always wash your hands before:

- Touching food and feeding children.
- Eating.
- Giving medicine or treating wounds.
- Touching a sick or injured person.

### Always wash your hands after:

- Preparing food, especially raw meat or poultry.
- Going to the toilet .
- Cleaning a child who has defecated.
- Touching an animal.
- Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing into your hands.
- Treating wounds or touching a sick or injured person.
- Handling garbage.

### When washing your hands:

- Use soap or another cleansing agent such as ash and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, if available.
- Rub hands together at least three times, especially between the fingers and under the fingernails.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry hands using a clean towel.

## HOW TO WASH HANDS PROPERLY

1. Wet hands



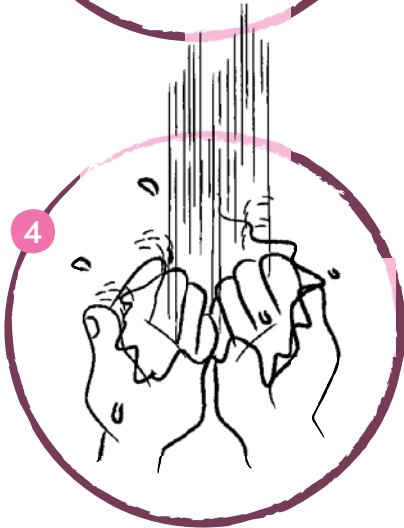
2. Apply soap on hands - for at least 20 seconds



3. Scrub backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails



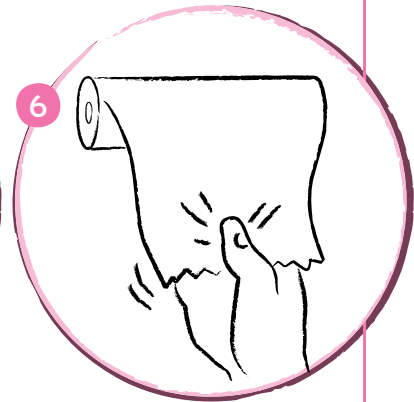
4. Rinse hands



5. Turn off the tap



6. Towel dry the hands



## • Always drink safe water

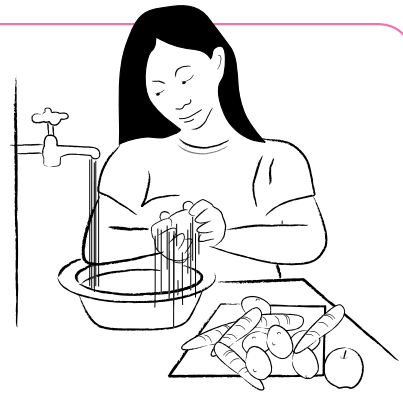
### WHAT TO DO

- Boil, filter or add chlorine to all water used for drinking and cooking unless you know it is safe.
- Cover containers used for storing water to prevent dust, mosquitoes, animals, etc. from entering.
- Keep containers used for carrying and storing water clean (both the inside and outside of the containers).

## • Prepare and store food safely

### WHAT TO DO

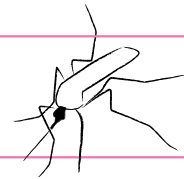
- Wash raw food (e.g. vegetables, fruits and fish) in clean water.
- Cook meat and fish thoroughly.
- Reheat cooked food thoroughly before eating.
- Wash food preparation surfaces and tools with soap and water.
- Store food in covered containers.
- Wash plates, bowls, cups and utensils with soap and water.
- If using bottles to feed your baby, sterilize them (by boiling them).



## • Prevent mosquitoes from breeding

### WHAT TO DO

- Cover containers (e.g. earthenware jars, metal drums and concrete cisterns) used for water storage.
- Cover or remove rubbish and other items that collect rainwater to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in them that can spread dengue or malaria.



## • Dispose of garbage

### WHAT TO DO

- Regularly remove garbage from your home and surroundings.

## • Use hygienic toilet practices

### WHAT TO DO

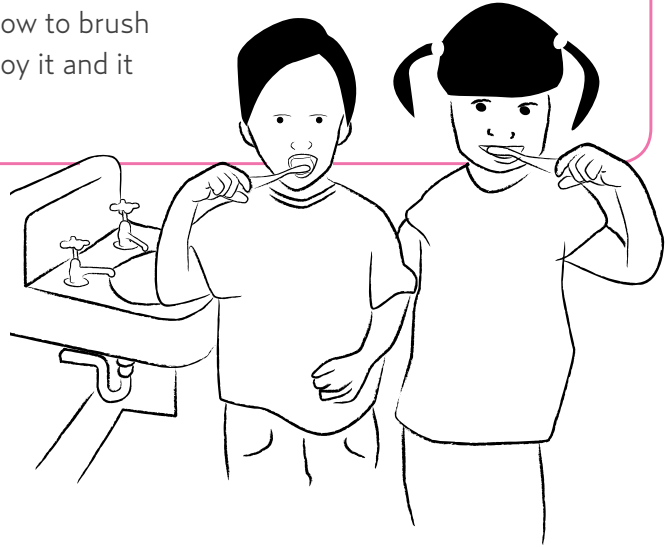
- Make sure that everyone in the family uses the toilet (or a potty for young children) so that germs from faeces do not contaminate the soil and water near your home.
- Dispose of all faeces, including those of babies, safely. Where there is no toilet, bury all faeces.

## DENTAL HYGIENE

Caring for teeth and gums is important for the health of the whole body.

### FEW TIPS FOR GETTING CHILDREN INTO GOOD HABITS

- Avoid food and drinks containing sugar.
- Before the baby has teeth, clean the gums with a soft cloth over your finger. First dip the cloth in cooled, boiled water with a little salt or baking soda on it and then use it.
- When the child has developed teeth, clean the child's teeth and gums after each meal with a small soft toothbrush, or use a piece of thick towel wrapped on a stick. You can use salt or baking soda instead of toothpaste. Clean the gums as well as the teeth.
- When children are old enough, teach them how to brush their own teeth. Make it fun so that they enjoy it and it becomes a habit for them.



### TEACHING CHILDREN GOOD HABITS

Parents should guide and teach children good habits, such as hand washing, as early as possible in life. Parents should do things with them as babies and then encourage them to do it by themselves as soon as they are able to do so. At the same time, parents should set a good example themselves. Children are unlikely to grow up with good habits if they have not seen them undertaken by the adults and caregivers around them.

As long as they are supervised, older preschool children can also be involved in gardening and preparing food. This is an effective way of developing good eating habits. Perhaps you can give your child his or her own little garden plot. This will also give you many opportunities for talking and interacting with your child.

Making up songs, rhymes and games about health, safety or food helps children learn about these topics in a playful way. Perhaps you already have some songs or rhymes in your local language. If not, try making some up, using familiar tunes. See the example song, "Wash, wash, wash my hands" below, sung to the tune of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*.

#### Wash, wash, wash my hands

*Wash, wash, wash my hands,  
Wash them after play.  
Round and round, up and down,  
Wash the germs away.*

*Wash, wash, wash my hands,  
Wash before I eat,  
If I sneeze, and after the loo,  
Then dry them nice and neat.*



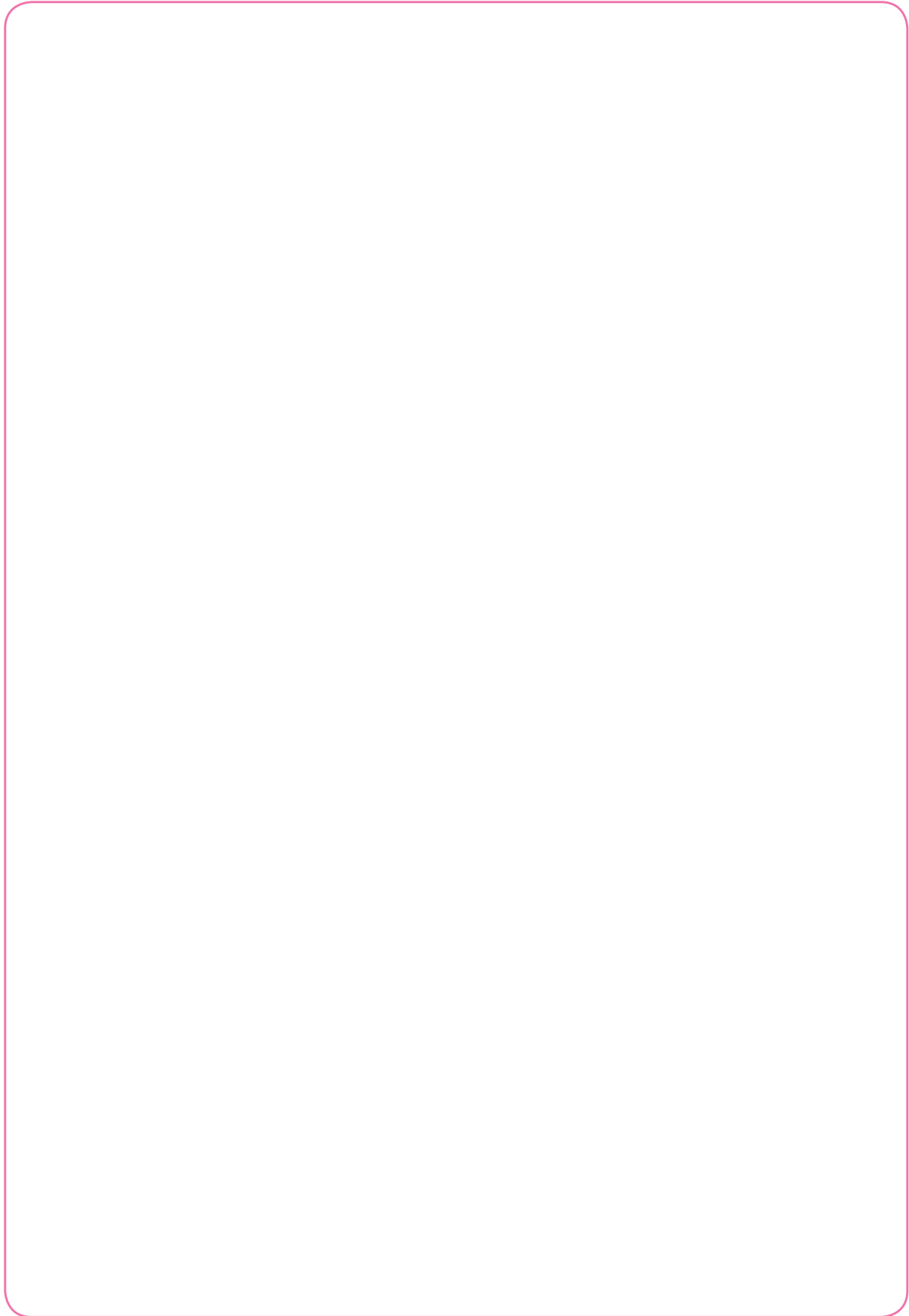
### Resources available in the community



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## NOTES



Booklet 4: **Health and Nutrition**

This booklet covers the main risks to the health of babies and young children, their causes, together with ways of preventing them. The importance of adequate nutritious food for children along with teaching them hygienic practices that will keep them safe and healthy both now and in the future, are also presented here.



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Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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# Play in the Lives of Children

Booklet 5



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# Play in the Lives of Children

## Remembering play...

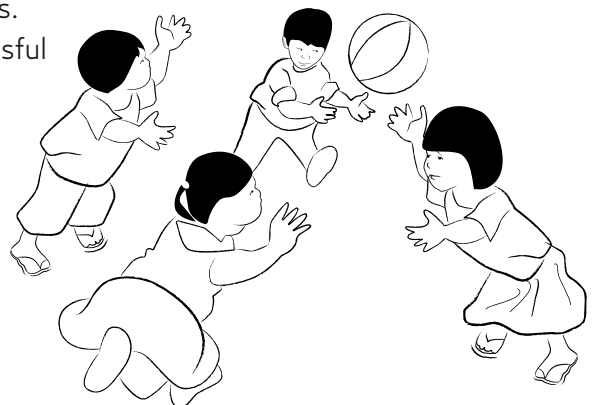
- I loved all sorts of games and toys that were just made up on the spot. We used to create all types of games at home – from pretending to go camping inside the house to jumping from bed to bed, as if we were circus performers. And yes, jumping in puddles – and showering in the rain. My dad used to make toy cars and trucks out of old empty cans, wires and bottle caps.
- Pretending to "keep house" and "cooking" with toy kitchen sets. I even remember playing under the table and using that as my house. I also used to put blankets over two chairs and used other types of materials to create hiding places.
- I remember making my little brothers and sister sit in front of me, while I "taught" them things. I'm not quite sure what they learned from me at that time though.

THESE ADULTS are remembering what it was like to play as a child. They recall the fun they had, pretending to be someone else and having secret places to hide from adults. What do you remember about playing when you were a child? How much time did you have to play? What games did you play? What toys did you have? Where were your favourite places for playing?

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Play is a right for all children. All children need time and freedom to play alone or with friends, to explore, to laugh and to enjoy themselves. Encouraging play is one of the most important ways adults can support children's development, learning and well-being.

- Play helps children develop physical skills and helps them keep fit and healthy.
- Play helps children become emotionally strong. It makes them feel happy and allows them to express many different emotions. This can help them cope with difficult and stressful situations that they might face in the future.
- Playing with parents and friends helps children develop strong bonds and friendships. When parents and children play together it also helps to bring the family closer together and thus encourages a feeling of security among the children.

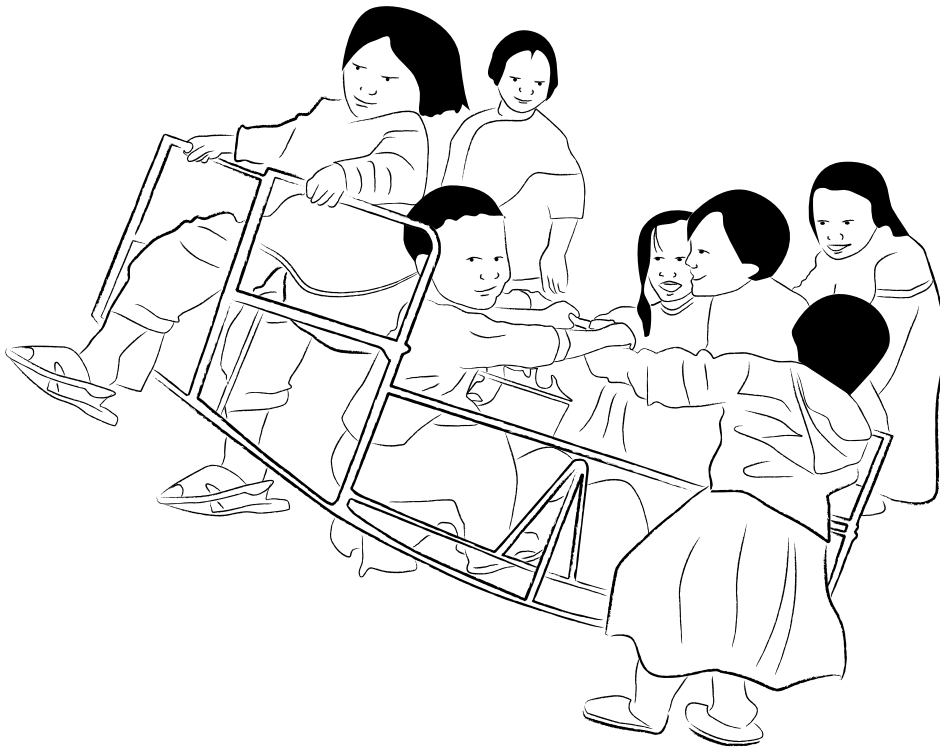




- Play helps children gain knowledge and develop important mental skills such as thinking, solving problems and making decisions.
- Play helps children develop language and communication skills.
- Play encourages creativity and allows children to pretend and use their imagination.
- Play allows children to “try out” and practice new skills as well as skills that are important for participation in their communities and cultures.



Play can take many forms and changes at different ages. Babies play with their hands and feet and use their senses to explore objects. By the second year, children might begin pretend play such as feeding the baby. They will sometimes talk when doing this. Following this stage, children will start to enjoy playing with other children more and more. Often this involves using their imagination and pretending. When doing this, children often use one object to represent something else; for example, they might take a piece of wood and use it as a telephone. Have you noticed this with your children? This type of play (pretend or make-believe play) is very important for brain development and for children’s overall development and well-being.


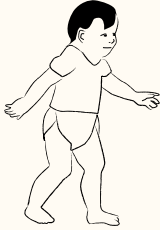
Below is an illustration of young children playing. How do you think that play is helping their development?







#### SUPPORTING PLAY AT DIFFERENT AGES

Children create their own play, but having adults who encourage it makes all the difference. Adults support play when they provide time and space for it to happen. For babies and young children, adults must also provide materials that are safe and suitable for the child’s stage of development. These materials can be simple, everyday objects – water, sand, cardboard boxes, pots and pans and other household items. They should also include traditional games and toys.

AGE	PLAY ACTIVITIES & TOYS
<p><b>Birth to 3 months</b></p> 	<p><b><i>Giving your baby love and care is far more important than any toy at this age. Cuddling and responding to your baby's needs develops a special relationship (or bond) between you and your baby. This early bonding will allow your baby to grow up secure and able to reach out and play with other children later on.</i></b></p> <p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your baby are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Babies at this age hear very well. They love to hear your voice so talk and sing to them. This encourages them to look at your face; it also encourages smiling, something that makes all parents happy.</li> <li>• Let your baby hear other sounds. For example, hang musical toys near the baby's bed; tie a small, safe bell to the baby's wrist or ankle; play music for your baby; hold your baby close and make clucking and other sounds.</li> <li>• Hang small toys or objects near the baby to encourage him or her to look and focus his or her eyes.</li> <li>• Hold the baby and bring a brightly coloured object like a toy up close so that he or she can see it and follow it with his or her eyes.</li> <li>• Decorate the room where your baby sleeps. The whole family can be involved in this, making changes as the baby gets older.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 to 6 months</b></p> 	<p><b><i>Play materials should be safe, movable and attract the baby's attention; they should encourage the baby to reach out, look at, taste, grasp, or touch the object in some way.</i></b></p> <p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your baby are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hang a few light objects near the baby or across the baby's bed so that she or he can reach out and touch them.</li> <li>• Give the baby safe rattles or toys that make a noise.</li> <li>• Babies of this age smile often and usually stop crying when you do something such as clap your hands; this makes the baby turn towards the sound. This is a good way to check that your baby can hear. Talk to a health worker if your baby never turns his or her head towards a sound.</li> <li>• When you carry your baby, say the names of the surrounding objects, in your own language. The baby will understand many words before she or he can say them.</li> <li>• Place the baby on her or his stomach to encourage her or him to reach out and to crawl.</li> </ul>

AGE	PLAY ACTIVITIES & TOYS
<p><b>6 to 12 months</b></p> 	<p><b>Babies in this age group are beginning to move around, so all objects in their reach must be safe to touch and put in their mouths.</b></p> <p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your baby are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your baby to crawl by putting interesting toys close by but out of reach.</li> <li>• Encourage him or her to stand holding onto you or to furniture.</li> <li>• Encourage your baby to hand toys or objects to you.</li> <li>• Give a small object to your baby; she or he will throw it on the floor and then look for it. Babies will do this again and again.</li> <li>• Give your baby small toys or objects that she or he can hold and can carry.</li> <li>• Teach basic gestures such as clapping and waving good-bye.</li> <li>• Give the baby a box of different objects such as small balls, soft toys and blocks; show him or her how to take them out and then to put them back into the box.</li> <li>• Babies of this age also enjoy hiding games such as peek-a-boo. Hide something from your baby and see if he or she can find it.</li> <li>• Talk and sing to your baby; do some actions with your baby as you sing; hold your baby in your arms and dance with him or her.</li> </ul>
<p><b>12 to 18 months</b></p> 	<p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your baby are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your baby to come to you for hugs when he or she can walk or run.</li> <li>• Encourage him or her to bring things to you.</li> <li>• Roll a ball to your baby and ask him or her to roll it back to you.</li> <li>• Children of this age have trouble letting go of objects. They often fling their toys, which can be a bit dangerous to other children. Play games where they can practice throwing small objects safely.</li> <li>• See if your baby can climb stairs or walk backwards.</li> <li>• Encourage the baby to stack things on top of each other. You can use small blocks or any objects that stack.</li> <li>• Encourage your baby to feed him or herself and also to drink from a cup.</li> <li>• Give your child paper and a thick crayon or pencil. By about 18 months children are ready to begin scribbling.</li> <li>• When you do things together, talk to your child all the time.</li> </ul>

AGE	PLAY ACTIVITIES & TOYS
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> 	<p><b><i>By now, children are usually walking and running. They love to climb and jump, to throw and kick balls. They like trying to do things by themselves but will love to play games with you.</i></b></p> <p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your child are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give your child toys that he or she can pull along or push; you can make these by tying a string to toys with wheels.</li> <li>• Encourage climbing onto a low step and jumping back down.</li> <li>• Under close supervision, encourage your child to climb up and down stairs where there is something to hold onto.</li> <li>• Provide space for kicking a large ball.</li> <li>• Throw balls or soft objects at a target.</li> <li>• Give your child paper and thick crayons for scribbling. Listen if your child talks about this.</li> <li>• Read story books, preferably ones with thick pages, and help your child turn the pages. You can make books by cutting out pictures and gluing them onto cardboard.</li> <li>• Allow your child to dig in sand or dirt using safe tools.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 to 3 years</b></p> 	<p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your child are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have a small bike or a toy with pedals, your child is probably ready to play with it now.</li> <li>• Children of this age enjoy blocks and other toys that they can fit together and pull apart. Plastic jars and screw lids are also good for this.</li> <li>• Offer your child simple puzzles (three to five pieces to begin with); do the puzzles together at first.</li> <li>• Encourage touching and feeling different textures. You could make a 'feely box.' Put objects that are soft, rough, fluffy etc in the box and let your child pull them out one by one. Encourage the child to feel the object; talk to her or him about how it feels.</li> <li>• Play throwing games with a ball.</li> <li>• Encourage climbing on low objects.</li> <li>• Tell and read stories; talk, sing and dance together.</li> </ul>

AGE	PLAY ACTIVITIES & TOYS
<p><b>3 years</b></p> 	<p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your child are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three year olds enjoy running, swinging, throwing and catching balls.</li> <li>• They enjoy singing and dancing to music.</li> <li>• They are beginning to play with other children.</li> <li>• They enjoy pretend play and will pretend to be mothers, fathers, babies or other people they know. Give them some simple objects (old clothes to dress up in, etc) to encourage this play.</li> <li>• They enjoy quiet play like painting and drawing, looking at picture books, playing with puppets and doing puzzles. Give them a variety of these play materials.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 and 5 years</b></p> 	<p><i>Some of the activities you can do together with your child are listed below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four and five year-olds enjoy all the above play activities. But they can now do many things by themselves. They can also share and play happily with other children.</li> <li>• They like to imitate adults in their play and they have wonderful imagination. Give them dress-up clothes and everyday objects that encourage this.</li> <li>• Provide games and activities that encourage your child to think, such as matching objects that are the same or different, memory games, games using numbers or colours. Children at this age find it difficult to follow rules in games so keep the games simple.</li> <li>• Give your child items to sort and count.</li> <li>• Read and tell stories; encourage your child to tell you stories; encourage him or her to ask questions. Answer the questions, so that he or she knows that you are listening and you care.</li> </ul>

Play happens when the parent or caregiver allows the child to explore the materials in his or her own way, rather than telling the child what to do. Children have a knack for losing interest when adults interfere or try to control the play! However, talking to the child, giving encouragement and answering questions are all good ways to support the child's learning and development. If the weather is good, and the surroundings are safe, then playing outside in a garden or elsewhere in the community is ideal for children. Outside play might involve toys with wheels or activities such as playing with balls or on swings. During all playtime, it is important that children are closely supervised by responsible adults.

#### PLAY AND WORK

Many young children around the world work to support their families. They may work alongside their families, helping with daily chores and tasks. This can be a positive experience for both the children and their families as long as the work is not excessive, or harmful. For example, a 3 or

4-year-old child might help by collecting sticks for the fire, but expecting her or him to carry a heavy bundle of wood could be quite dangerous. At what age do you expect a child to do some work to help the family? What sort of work? Doing daily chores gives some children very little time to play. This can be especially true for girls. Fortunately, children are naturally playful and will often find ways to play even when they are working. For example, a little girl gathering sticks might start a game by kicking the sticks as far as she can before picking them up. Have you noticed this?

Let your young children help with small tasks but talk to them while they are doing these. Give all your children, regardless of age and sex, time to play and try not to get impatient if the children turn their work into play. Make sure that girls have the same amount of playtime as boys.

### ENCOURAGING PLAY WHILE YOU ARE WORKING

Here are some ideas for letting your child play alongside you while you are working. You can probably think of other ideas after you read these:

#### WHILE YOU ARE WASHING CLOTHES

- Give babies a small container of water they can put their hands in and splash around.
- Let children wash soft toys, small items of clothing, dolls and dolls' clothes.
- Give them clothes pins to hang their washing on a line.
- Provide a tub of clean water and some containers that children can fill and empty. Extend their thinking and language by asking questions such as, how many small containers of water does it take to fill the bigger one?
- Sing songs and talk to children. Ask questions that make them think and use new words.

#### WHILE YOU ARE PREPARING FOOD

- Encourage children to wash their hands before handling food so that they are learning good hygiene practices.
- If babies are able to sit or crawl, give them some things to roll, push or pull.
- Give them lids they can hit together to make a noise.
- Let older preschool children sort the vegetables before you cook them. Ask them about each group of vegetables; for example, What colour are the carrots? What do carrots look like? How do the carrots feel? How many carrots are there?
- Give children some dough to play with when you are making bread. Talk to them about the shapes they are making.
- Let older preschool children use safe tools to cut and prepare vegetables and fruits.

#### WHILE YOU ARE GATHERING WOOD OR BUYING FOOD

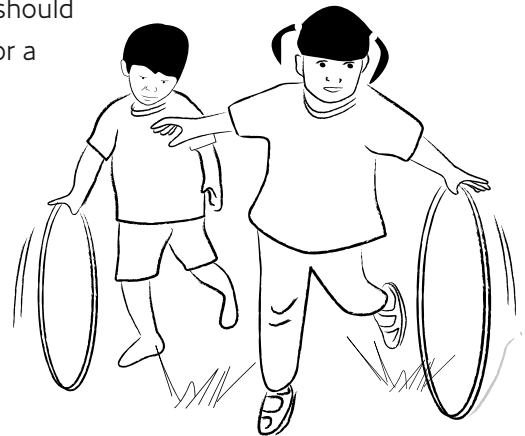
- Give children their own small baskets to carry things in.
- Encourage children to sort, count and talk about what they have in their baskets.
- When the child stops to explore something, give them time and take time to look at and talk about what they have discovered.
- Let children play within a safe distance from you while you are busy outside.
- As you are walking and looking, talk about things around you. Play games such as



**MAKING TOYS**

Many simple things in the home can be used as toys, or turned into them. Toys for babies and young children can also be made at home or in a community workshop. Remember that young children learn through their senses, so toys that encourage a child to look, listen, touch, smell or taste are particularly helpful. Care should be taken that all materials are safe and are not small enough for a child to swallow or put into their noses or their ears.

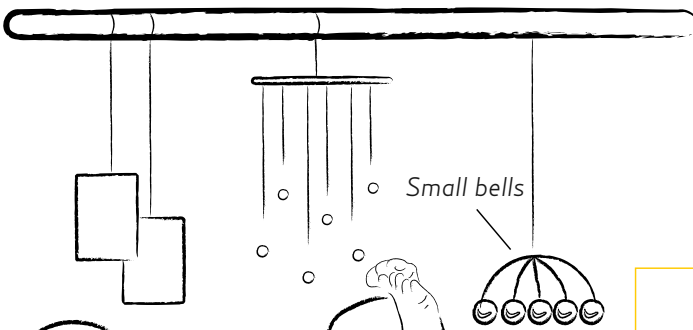
Below are a few suggestions for making toys at home. After looking at these, you will have many other ideas and will think of local materials that you could use. You will also realize that these toys are suitable for all babies and young children. The only difference is that some children with disabilities may use them when they are older than able-bodied children or may need extra support or supervision when playing with the toys.



**TOYS FOR LOOKING AND LISTENING\***

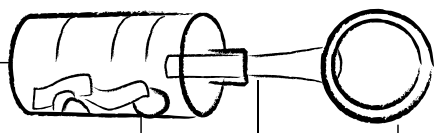
*Small mirrors or pieces of tin foil or shiny paper.*

*Colourful objects that move in the air.*



**TIN CAN RATTLE**

**PLASTIC BOTTLE RATTLE**



- A see-through plastic bottle.
- Strips cut from plastic bottles of different colors, colorful stones, nuts etc.
- A stick of wood.
- Ring cut from a plastic bottle, bamboo or another material.
- Ring can be wrapped with strips of cloth or fine tubing for easier grip.

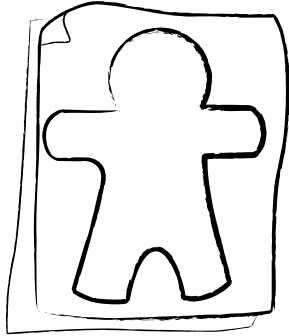
For a baby, hang a 'ring of beads' where she/he can reach and touch it.

\*Adapted from Disabled Village Children

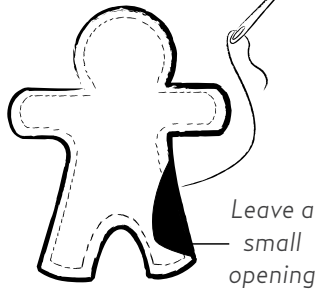
TOYS FOR LOOKING AND LISTENING

DOLL RATTLE

Draw a doll on 2 pieces of cloth and cut them out.

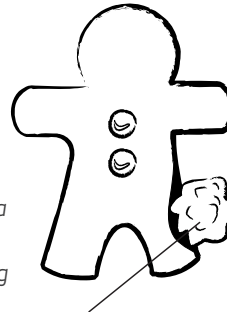


Sew the 2 dolls together.

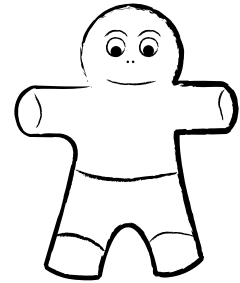


Leave a small opening

Turn the doll inside out.

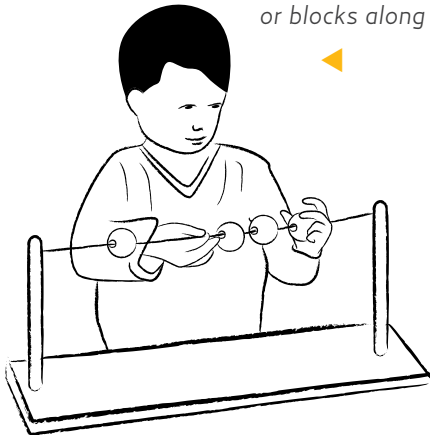


Sew or draw on a face.



Put small bells or a rattle inside and stuff with kapok, cotton or sponge and sew shut.

To help develop controlled movement of the hands and arms, the child can move beads or blocks along a rod or wire.



Start with simpler games with square or round figures

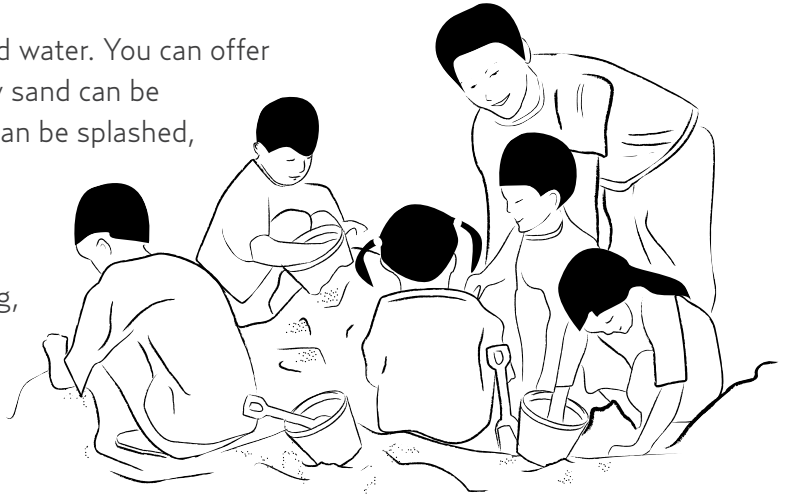
Use blocks, balls, round fruits or pill bottles.



## BASIC PLAY MATERIALS

### • Sand and water

Children of all ages enjoy playing in sand and water. You can offer these to children separately or together. Dry sand can be sifted, poured, shovelled and raked. Water can be splashed, poured and frozen; it can be used to make bubbles. When children combine water and sand they learn how they can change materials. They can use wet sand for digging, doing pretend cooking and in many other creative ways. Playing with sand and water helps children build many skills.



### • Blocks

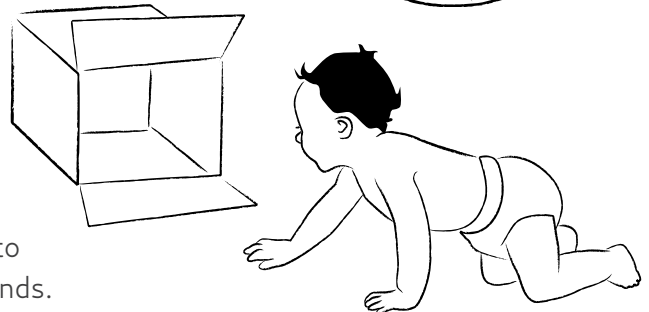
All children enjoy stacking things and building. They will do this with food packets and cans if you let them. Making their own blocks will give them many hours of fun and learning. They will learn about space and measurement while developing many other mathematical and thinking skills.

If you have access to wood cut-offs these can make excellent blocks. You will need to smooth them with sand paper to get rid of rough surfaces and sharp ends. If possible, finish them with some oil or lacquer. You can also make your own blocks from milk cartons or similar containers.



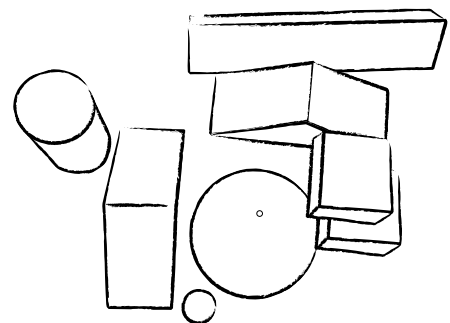
### • Cardboard boxes

Large cartons are lots of fun for babies and young children of all ages. They explore them, hide inside them, climb in and out and through them, and will use the boxes to make up their own games. Older preschoolers may turn them into "cubby houses" – places to play alone or with friends.



### • Objects for sorting and counting

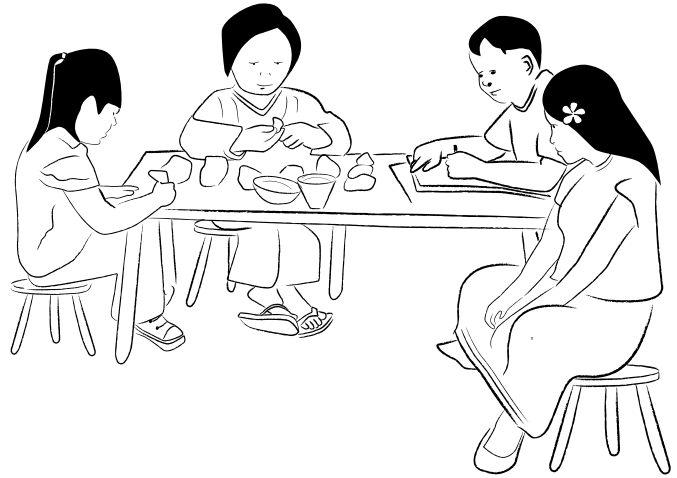
Interesting objects that can be used for sorting and counting, such as shells, leaves, stones or safe recycled materials, can be found anywhere. You will be helping your child gain important skills by collecting these. Ask your child to put all the similar objects together. Ask how they are the same, how they feel, smell, etc, and how many there are in each group. If possible, leave the objects in containers where your preschooler can reach them. Teach her or him to put them away when finished playing.



## • Materials for drawing and making things

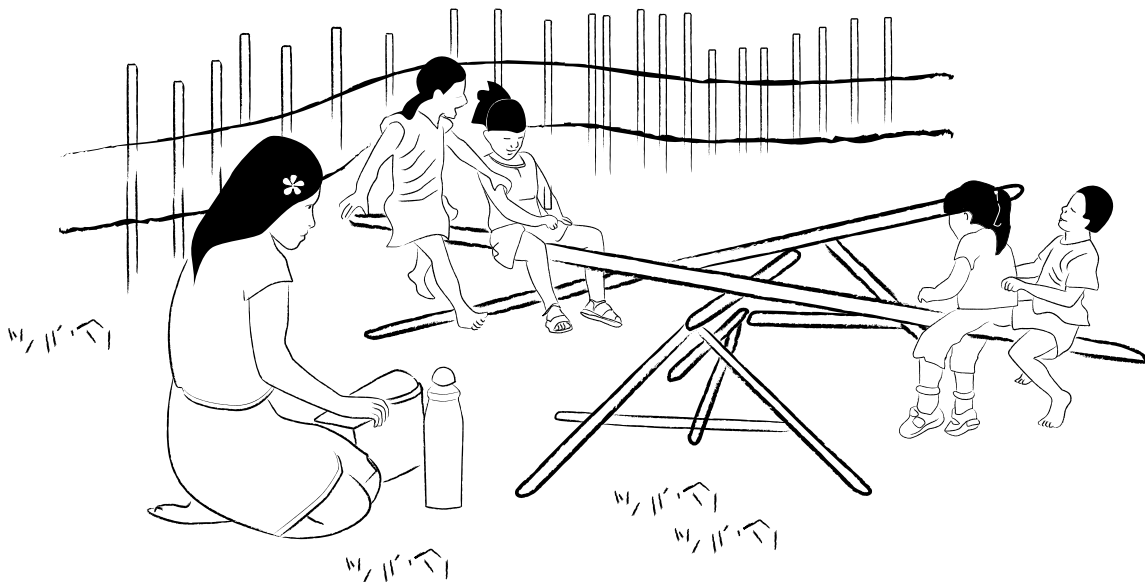
Children use drawing and painting to tell us what they are thinking or how they are feeling. Although it may look like just a scribble to you, the child may tell you a very interesting story about the drawing if you show interest. Never tell them what to draw, or draw for them. Rather, encourage them and praise their efforts.

Children from about 3 years of age can use many kinds of art materials. Provide crayons, pencils, brushes, homemade glue and paints, and whatever local materials are available. Children also benefit from watching adults involved in arts and crafts such as weaving and pottery. Encourage them to observe, and then give them some materials that they can explore and play with by themselves.



### USING THE LOCAL SURROUNDINGS

Many communities have places for children to play: parks, playgrounds, natural places such as a river or the sea, perhaps a library or zoo. Parents and caregivers are urged to take their babies and young children to these places. They provide numerous opportunities for playful learning, including opportunities for children to play together. As children get older, playing with other children is important. If there is a playgroup or an early learning centre in your community try to enrol your child in it. The activities your child gets involved in here will extend all the good things you are doing at home.



## TELEVISION AND COMPUTER GAMES

### • **Television**

Television has opened up the world to families around the world. It provides them with entertainment and relaxation, but also exposes children to many risks:

- They may see a lot of violence and sex.
- They may copy the violent behaviour and bad language in their play.
- They often sit for long periods of time; this can take the place of play.
- It can affect their eyesight.
- It can interfere with quality time spent with the family.

#### WHAT PARENTS CAN DO?

- Restrict the amount of television time for young children. Less than 10 hours a week (just over one hour per day) is recommended for children under 5 years.
- Find programmes that are suitable for children and allow children to watch only those programmes.
- Turn off the television when the programme is over.
- Spend time talking to your child about what they are watching, especially about advertisements and explain that the advertisers are trying to sell things and advertisements are not necessarily truthful.
- If you have a remote, keep it out of reach of children. Even babies learn quickly to press the buttons and turn on the television.

### • **Computer games**

Young children are growing up in a world of computers and technology. These have both benefits and risks:

- Good computer games can be fun for older preschool children, and can teach them skills. However, they should be used carefully. They should never take the place of other types of play.
- Children should not be allowed to play or see adult computer games, which are often violent. Parents should make sure children do not have access to these.

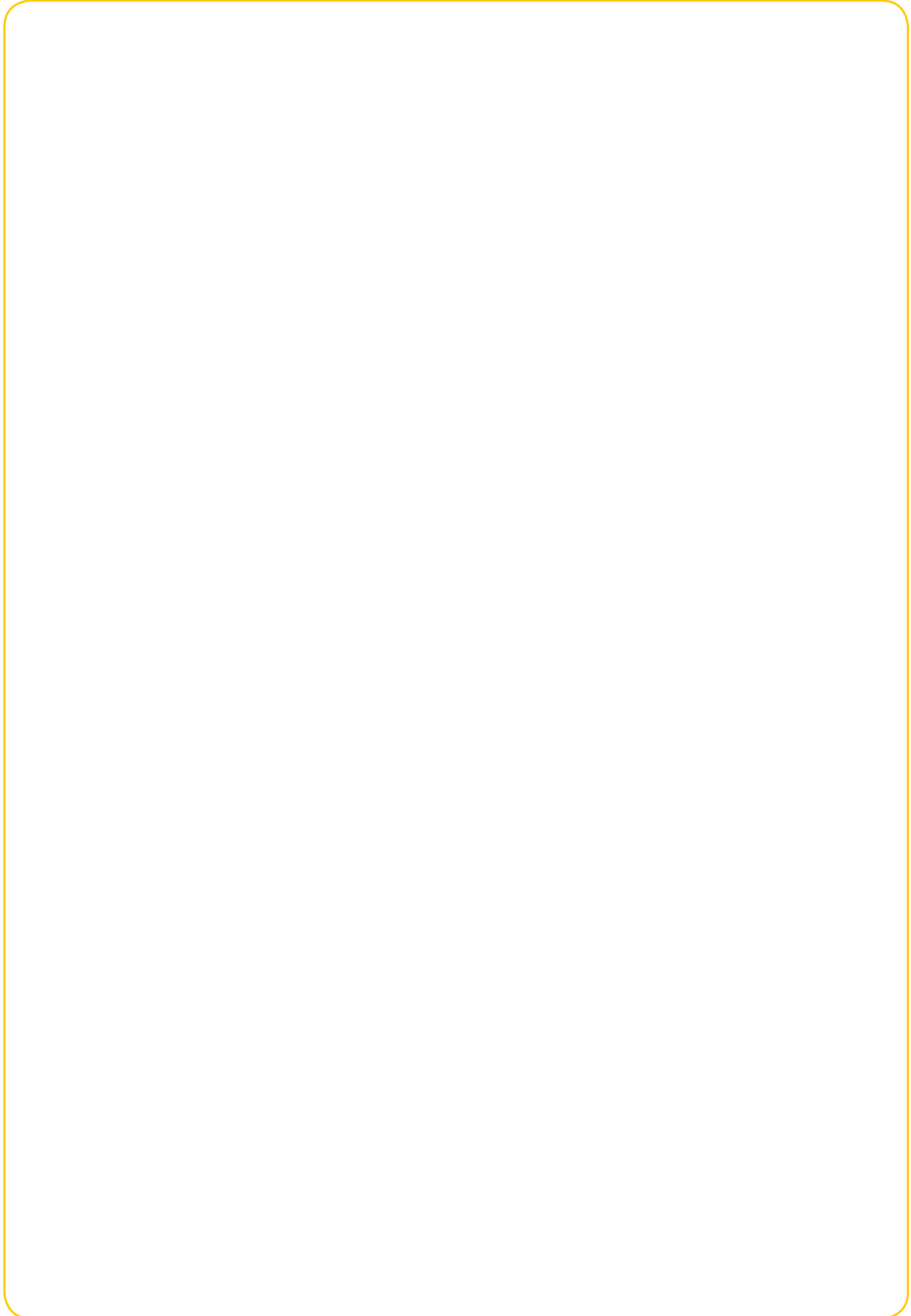
### Resources and services available in the community



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## NOTES



Booklet 5: **Play in the Lives of Children**

This booklet shows how play supports all areas of children's learning and development. There are practical tips on activities which can be done with the children, and on how the local surroundings and everyday materials can be used for children's play.



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# The Many Languages of Children

Booklet 6



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# The Many Languages of Children

Babies are born ready to communicate. They can hear even before they are born, and within a few days of birth they can already recognize their mother's voice. From birth, they express their needs and emotions in non-verbal ways, through facial expressions and body movements, as well as through crying. Parents who understand their baby's special ways of communicating are better able to comfort them and respond to their needs.

BABIES USE MANY DIFFERENT SOUNDS, such as cooing and babbling. At this stage they are capable of learning any language in the world. Yet by the end of the first year, they have tuned into the language used by their family and are beginning to copy its sounds, accents and patterns. They may not be using words yet, but they are beginning to understand the words adults use.

Talking to babies while feeding and changing them, playing games, singing, reading and telling stories all help to build up their understanding of words and to develop other important language skills. This is very important for their overall development, as language affects all other areas of development. For example, a child who cannot speak clearly may have trouble making friends.



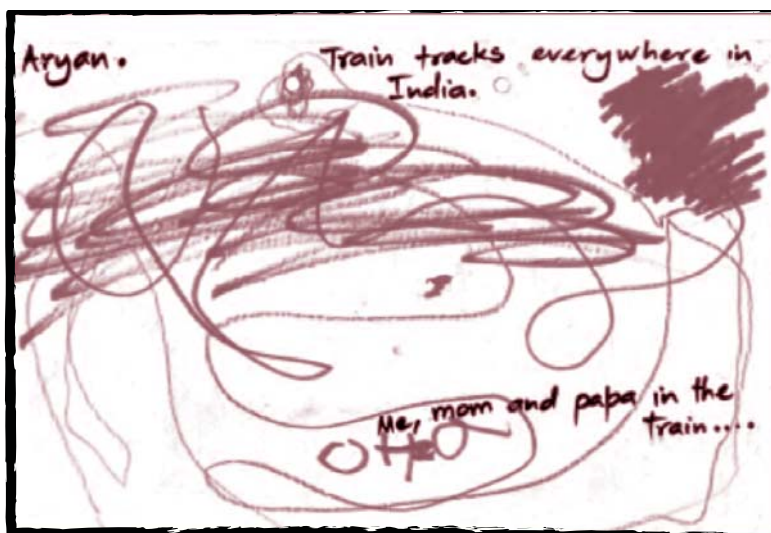
## THE LANGUAGES CHILDREN USE

Children communicate in many different ways, not just through speaking. Of course, this is true for adults too. They share information through facial expressions, body and sign language, drawing and painting, dance and music, as well as through stories, speaking, reading and writing. What ways are used in your family and community to share information and express feelings?

Expressing themselves through art work, such as drawing, is particularly important for young children. Children can start using pencils, crayons and paint brushes as soon as they can hold them – usually around 18 months of age. Watch their surprise and delight as they make their first marks on paper. It is like magic to them. There is no stopping them now! They will experiment with lines, shapes and colours, often talking as they draw.

Between two and three years, children begin using drawing as a way of telling us something. The drawing may look like a scribble, but it has meaning for the child. At first, if you ask, the child might just give a name to the drawing; for example, "bird." Then, once they have enough vocabulary, children will often make up a story about their drawing. You can write the story down for the child in his or her own words, and then read it back to them. This is an important step on the way for your child to learn to read and write.

Young children also communicate their ideas and express themselves through music, dance, pretend or make-believe play and through using materials such as clay and building blocks. It is not necessary to provide them with expensive materials. Given the opportunity, children will use any materials they can get their hands on to express their ideas creatively. By observing and participating in community life they will also learn the art forms that are used in your community and culture. These may include traditional dances, patterns in art, storytelling, drama, puppetry, plays, songs or writings in the local language.



*Aryan's scribble drawing makes sense when he tells a story about it. He has just been to India and has been on a train there. The many train tracks obviously caught his attention. See how they take up most of the page. He, his mother (mom) and father (papa) are in the drawing too, but they are very small compared with the train tracks. (Aryan, from Fiji. 5 years old)*

Source: Ministry of Education. 2009. Na Noda Mataniciva: Kindergarten curriculum guidelines for the Fiji Islands, Suva, Ministry of Education



**HEARING AND SPEAKING YOUR MOTHER TONGUE**

Parents are encouraged to talk to their babies and young children in their mother tongue. In this way, the mother tongue becomes the child's first language, and the culture and traditions associated with the language can be passed on to the child. Learning your mother tongue will not prevent your children from learning other languages later on. In fact, young children learn other languages easily after they have learned their first language.

**• Being able to speak the mother tongue is important:**

- Without it, children may not be able to communicate well with parents, grandparents and others in their family and community.
- Young children learn best when taught in their mother tongue.
- The language could be lost if it is not passed onto the children.
- The culture will be weakened if the language is lost.



**WHAT PARENTS CAN DO?**

- Use your mother tongue to name objects, body parts and actions, so that a baby's first words are in the mother tongue. Show delight and pleasure when the child uses these words.
- Talk, sing and play games in your mother tongue.
- Make up songs, rhymes, chants etc in your mother tongue.
- Tell stories in your mother tongue, including traditional stories for older children.
- When reading books to children talk about the pictures or tell the story in your mother tongue, even if the book is in another language.
- Extend what children say and give them new words. For example, if your child points to two dogs and says "dog" in your language, you can reply, "Yes, there are two black dogs over there." Use puppets to further encourage talking.
- Bring together people in the community who know traditional stories from your community to create audio cassettes that record themselves telling those stories (in your mother tongue). The audio cassettes and cassette player could be kept in the Community Learning Centre where parents can play the cassettes to their children.
- Continue using and teaching your child in your mother tongue even when he or she goes to school. You want to make sure children end up with a complete and rich language, not just baby talk.

Where several languages are spoken in the home and community, parents do not have to decide what language(s) they want their children to use. Children learn languages easily and can learn more than one at the same time. If one parent always speaks to the child in one language (for example: his or her mother tongue), and the other parent speaks in another language, the child will usually speak both languages. The child may mix up the languages at first, but eventually he or she will sort them out and will be able to use both.



## EARLY STEPS TOWARDS READING AND WRITING

It is important that all children learn to read and write. However, it is **NOT** recommended that children have formal teaching of reading and writing before they go to school.

There are many steps along the way towards literacy, and many playful ways that parents can help, even if they cannot read and write themselves. Below are some ideas:

## ACTIVITIES THAT HELP CHILDREN BECOME AWARE OF THE SOUNDS IN THEIR LANGUAGE

- When babies begin to make sounds, repeat those sounds back to them. This builds their confidence to speak and strengthens their language capacity.
- Sing and play rhyming games and local traditional songs with babies and young children. You probably have many in your language.
- For older preschoolers and children beginning school, write the words of songs and rhymes on a poster or a flip chart. Seeing the words as they say the rhyme helps them learn to read.
- Read or tell stories using rhyming words.
- Play games using rhyming words; for example, ask children to point to a body part such as the head. Ask them to say words that rhyme with it.
- Clap the beat in children's names.
- Make up your own rhymes and songs that emphasize the sounds of the language; for example:



## SAWING\*

*See-saw, saw the wood,  
Saw it through and through.  
Down and up, up and down,  
Till the wood is cut in two  
Zz-Zz  
Zz- Zz- Zz  
Zz- Zz- Zz*

## FROG JUMPING\*

*Jump froggie, jump  
Over the log with a 'glump'  
Stop for a rest,  
Puff out your chest,  
And jump, froggie, jump!*

\*Source: Vika Maloni and Inise Koroï, Kindergarten Teachers, Fiji.

### ACTIVITIES THAT HELP CHILDREN BECOME AWARE OF PRINTED WORDS

- Read to children every day. If parents are not readers, other family members could do this. If there are no story books you can read other material such as labels on food, community notices and magazines.
- Let children see other people reading and writing, such as older children doing their homework.
- Find places in the community where there are written words. Point out street signs and other writings as you walk around your local area with your child.
- Make picture books for your child, by cutting out pictures or drawing pictures yourself. Write a simple sentence on each page.
- If you have children's books written in another language, ask someone to translate them into your mother tongue. Write the translated words on each page.
- Make labels and signs and put these around the house; for example, the word "window" on the window.
- Read alphabet books to your child. Make your own alphabet books with pictures of things that are commonly used or seen by the child.
- Help your child to write his or her name.
- Encourage play writing; for example, using sticks to write in sand or dirt, using chalk, pencils or crayons, using a paint brush and water.
- Encourage children to draw or paint, then ask them to tell you about their drawing and painting. Write down their words exactly as they say them. Read them back to the child and encourage the child to "read" the words with you.
- Hang some of these drawings or paintings around the house or make a book from them. Your child will enjoy having you read her or his stories and will try to join in.



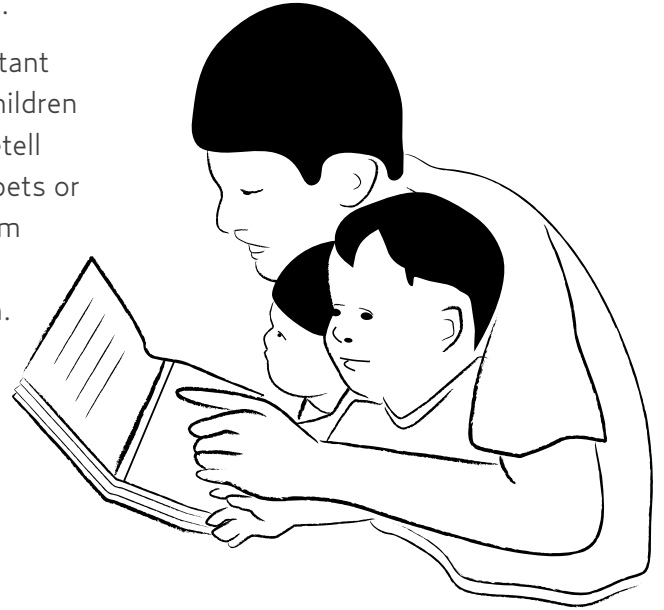
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**STORYTELLING**

Storytelling is used in many cultures to pass on information. Traditional stories generally have a serious purpose as well as being a form of entertainment. They carry knowledge about the world and explain rules for behaving and living, such as how to look after the land or about relationships. Do you have stories like this that have been passed onto you? What lessons do they teach? When and how do you tell them to your children?

Through listening to these stories, children learn about their culture, relationships, their surroundings and their homeland. For example, stories about the land help children learn to understand the land and the behaviour of plants and animals.

Non-traditional stories also often pass on important messages. Children need to hear such stories. Children should also be encouraged to tell stories, or to retell stories in their own words. Having pictures, puppets or felt cut-outs of the main characters will help them remember the main points of the story, and will make them want to tell the story again and again.



**CHILDREN ARE NEVER TOO YOUNG FOR BOOKS**

Here are some tips for choosing books for your children.

**UNDER 6 MONTHS**

- Cloth or foam books are ideal since both are washable.
- Babies like simple bright pictures on a contrasting background.

**6 TO 12 MONTHS**

- Thick cardboard pages are good because children can turn the pages themselves and the pages will not tear.
- Books with pictures of familiar objects and actions such as eating, washing hands and getting dressed.

**2 YEARS**

- At this age, they are ready for stories. They like simple stories about familiar activities such as going to the shop, going to bed, helping in the garden.
- Children of this age often spend a lot of time looking at pictures, making comments and asking questions about them. So books should have clear and interesting pictures to go with the writing on each page.

**3 TO 5 YEARS**

- At this age, children like interesting and creative stories that involve animals and other characters, and that encourage them to talk and ask questions.
- Each page should have only one or two short sentences.
- Each page should have pictures that match the words on the page.
- Repetition of words (as in a song); this helps children learn to recognize words.
- New words, but not too many. Children need to be able to follow and understand the story.



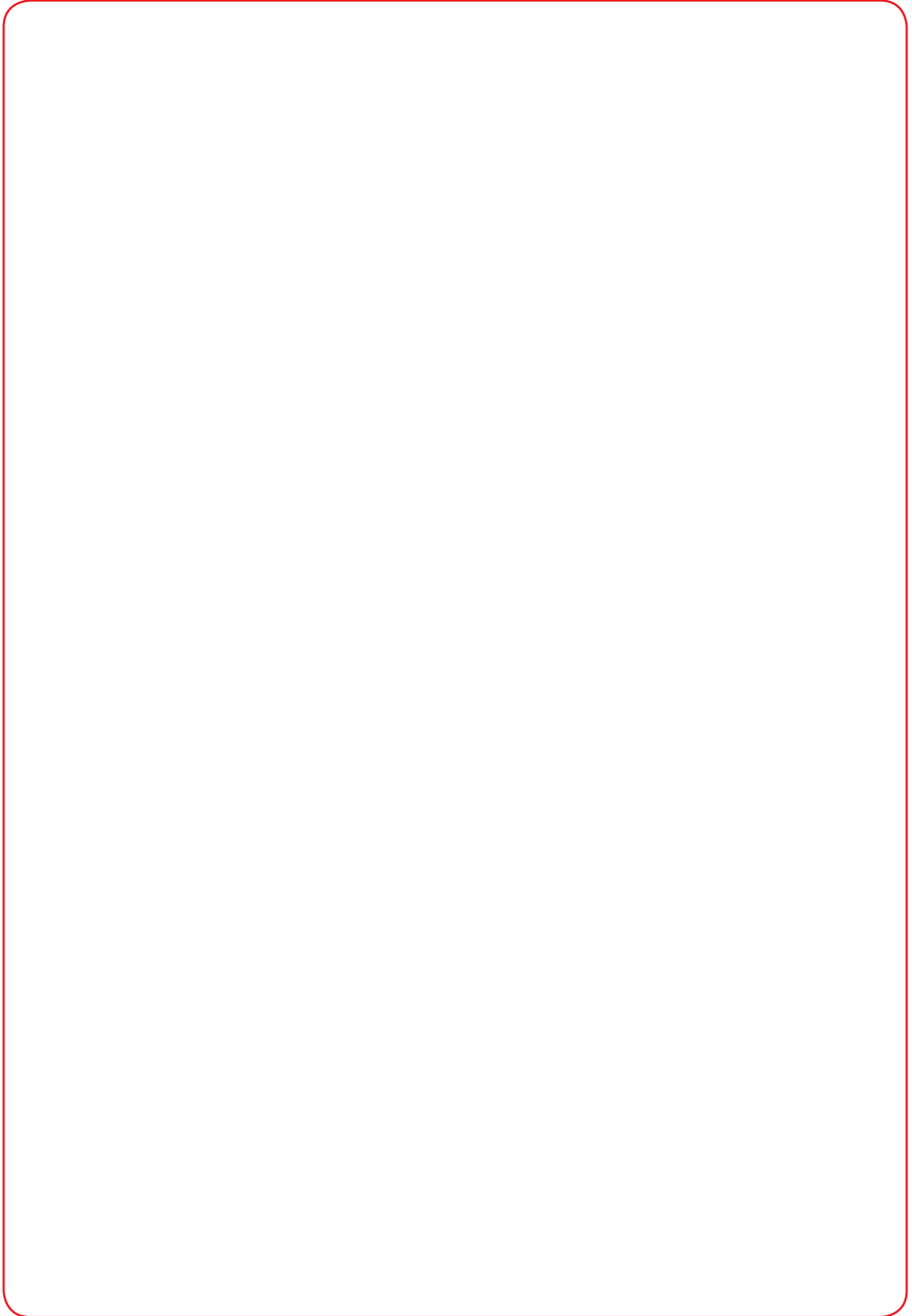
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## Resources and services available in the community

## NOTES



Booklet 6: **The Many Languages of Children**

This booklet looks at the many different ways that babies and young children communicate. It also emphasizes the importance of children using their mother tongue. There are tips given for activities that help develop children's language, including those that build a strong foundation for reading and writing.



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# Young Children's Behaviour

Booklet 7



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# Young Children's Behaviour

Young children usually behave spontaneously and naturally. Their actions can make parents feel happy and proud, but also, at times, anxious and stressed. It is important to always remain patient, to try to understand the reasons for a child's behaviour and to never use physical punishment. Apart from causing physical damage, violence and harsh treatment can cause stress and lead to mental and emotional problems.

Guiding children's behaviour in a gentle, firm way is not always easy for parents. But if parents have a warm and close relationship with their children, both parents and children will get through challenging moments and will look back on these incidents as just part of growing up.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR

Children are not born knowing how to behave. They do not know the difference between right and wrong, or the rules and expectations of their families and cultures. They gradually learn these things from parents and from others around them. Two of the biggest challenges facing young children are:

- **Learning the behaviour expected by their families and the community.**
- **Being able to control their own behaviour.**

These are difficult tasks and take a long time to learn. Parents need to have reasonable expectations for children. At all times, and at all ages, parents should maintain good communication with their child, and constantly show their love and care towards the child, even when the child makes a mistake.

By about 18 months of age most toddlers can obey simple requests such as "Put the cup on the table." You can now begin to teach them some basic rules such as things they should not touch because they will hurt themselves; for example, the stove or an electric plug point. But before two years of age, children cannot understand adult rules or expectations. You might hear a two year old who is struggling with this learning saying "No, no, no" to himself/herself as he/she touches the stove. The child is not being naughty; he or she is learning. It is very easy to start a battle with a child in these moments, but in situations like this you should stay calm and remind the child of the rules, then distract the child with a toy or something interesting to look at.

Young children cannot control their emotions and often have emotional outbursts or tantrums. Just give them time to get over the tantrum, keep them safe, then talk to them, reassuring them



that you love them. These outbursts become less and less as children's language develops and they are able to tell you in words about their feelings and needs. Punishment is not effective, as young children often do not understand what they have done wrong. Likewise, trying to reason with them will not achieve anything.

Children become more confident as they get older and by four years of age are beginning to manage their emotions. But they will need many years to learn to be able to control themselves; even some adults have still not learned to control themselves. So be patient with all children.

By four years old, children are beginning to understand cause and effect, so you can now talk to them about rules and consequences: "If you do this... then ... will happen." By four they also start to understand about sharing and taking turns, and can play well with other children.

By the time they go to school, young children have generally developed their social and emotional skills enough to be able to enjoy the school environment. Starting school can be very stressful for children, however. It is important that they receive support and understanding at this time. Otherwise, behaviour and learning problems can emerge.

By the time they start school, children are developing a sense of right and wrong but they may not yet understand the difference between their imagination and reality and often do not understand the importance of telling the truth. They are not being bad when they tell you little lies. They may really believe what they are saying, or they may want to please you by telling you something you want to hear, and, of course, if they are afraid of being punished they will avoid telling the truth. Encourage them to tell you the truth and reassure them that they will not be punished.

Even when they know what is right and wrong, children will break the rules at times, often deliberately. All children do. They may do this to test you, or to assert themselves, or to draw attention to themselves because they are feeling unloved or insecure, or have some other unmet need. All behaviour has a reason. Try to understand the reason.

If a child's behaviour seems to be outside what you would expect for the age of the child, then you need to consider what else could be causing the problem. Many things can affect children's behaviour. These include poor nutrition, illness and medication, problems with hearing or seeing, and stress caused by conditions within the family or in the community.

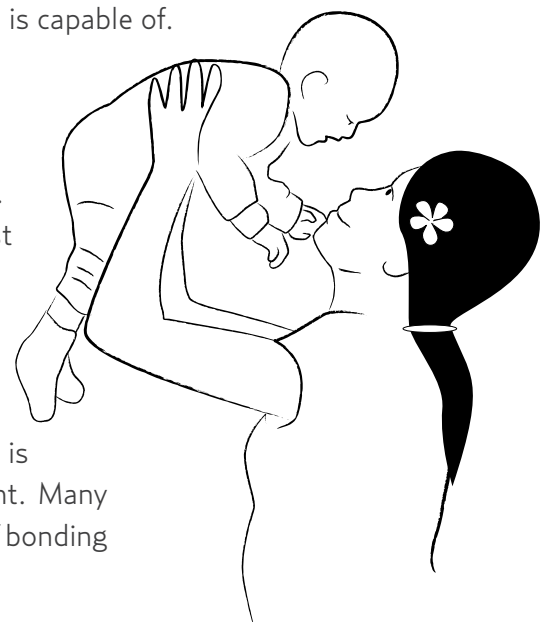
It is best to treat the child according to the age she or he is acting. This is true also for children whose development is slow. Do not expect more than she or he is capable of.

### BUILDING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

When children are in a caring, trusting relationship they are more likely to learn the skills and values we want them to have. Building a good relationship with your child is therefore the first step to guiding their behaviour. Below are a few suggestions:

#### • Show your child that you love her or him

A strong bond between mother and child begins at birth and is closely related to the child's overall behaviour and development. Many behaviour problems in children and adults can be traced to a lack of bonding



in the early years. Hold and cuddle your baby as soon as possible after birth. Continue this close physical connection through breastfeeding, talking and singing to your baby and responding in a caring way to his or her cries. As the child grows, regularly show your love and fondness for her or him. All young children need to feel loved by those closest to them.

### • Talk to your child

Talking to babies is important even though they may not understand your words. Talking not only develops their language, but also strengthens the relationship between you and the baby. For example, when you talk to babies they respond to your voice and facial expressions with gurgles, smiles or other gestures. You then respond to them with more words and gestures, and so a type of "conversation" takes place.

This social interaction should continue and expand throughout childhood. If you have a good relationship with your child, she or he is more likely to talk to you about things that are bothering him or her. This can avoid behavioural problems later on.



### • Encourage your child

Letting children know that you value what she or he has done will make the child feel good about himself or herself. Give positive comments and encouragement when children learn something new or achieve something they have been trying to do. This is particularly important for children with difficult behaviour. Children love attention and when they get attention for good behaviour they are likely to repeat such behaviour. If they only get attention for naughty behaviour, then they are more likely to repeat that behaviour, because any attention is better than none.

### • Share time and experiences

When parents have a number of children, it is easy to forget that each one of them needs special attention. Mothers and fathers should both try to spend time with their children together and also separately. This might be as simple as sharing a daily task with a child.

This is an opportunity to talk to the child about things that are important to her or him.



## POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR GUIDING AND MANAGING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

Having a good relationship with children is a strong foundation for guiding them as they learn the rules and values of society. Young children's behaviour can test the best of parents at times, however. Responding to bad behaviour by hitting, beating or using other forms of violent or humiliating punishment can harm children physically and mentally. Rather than teaching children how to manage their own behaviour it teaches them to avoid getting caught. There are other ways to manage children's behaviour.

**Below are some strategies for guiding children's behaviour and for responding to difficult behaviour in a positive way:**

### • Model the behaviour you want in children

Babies and young children learn a great deal about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour by watching and copying the behaviour of their parents and other people around them. For example, if men treat women badly, children see this and will likely copy the behaviour; if adults are cruel to animals, children are likely to do the same. Likewise, if adults are caring towards animals, children are likely to also be caring.

### • Set clear limits and guidelines for behaviour and explain the cause-and-effect of the behaviour

Parents and caregivers should tell children in simple words or gestures what they expect of them and why. Explain to children why they should or should not do certain things. For example, "You can look at the flowers, but don't touch them because you might destroy them and the owner of the flowers will be angry with you."; "You must not bite your baby brother because if you do, he will be sad and mummy will be angry, and then you will not be allowed to play with him for a while".



There must always be consequences for breaking the rules, but these should not humiliate or harm the child. They should be looked on as positive ways of teaching the child, not as forms of punishment and they should be age appropriate. For example, if the rule is, "You can play outside but do not go on the vegetable garden," a reasonable consequence for breaking this rule might be that the child has to stay indoors for a short period of time rather than being allowed out to play.

### • Be consistent

Young children will test the limits that adults have set for them. They are not being naughty; it is their way of finding out if you are serious and what the limits really are. Because of this, it is important to be consistent in what the limits are and be consistent with the consequences that follow from breaking them.

### • Acknowledge good behaviour

Adults always seem to notice children's wrong behaviour, but often ignore good behaviour. Focus on good behaviour and let children know when you are pleased. Children will learn quickly about your expectations if you notice them following the rules and tell them in words and gestures that you are pleased with their behaviour. For example, if a child who is playing outside is very careful to keep off the vegetable patch, the parents might show their pleasure with a smile and a few words.

### • Ignore inappropriate behaviour

Children often do annoying things just to get attention from an adult. If the behaviour is not serious, it is best to ignore it. Usually if the child does not get any attention she or he will not do it again. Paying attention to it may make the child do it more often.

### • Accept that children make mistakes

Young children have so much to learn. Like you when you are learning something new, it takes a while to get it right. Children will forget the rules at times and will make mistakes. Try not to get too upset. Rather, remind them of the rules and your expectations.

### • Encourage children to express their feelings

Children need opportunities to express their emotions and feelings if they are to learn how to manage them. Before they can talk well, children may express what they feel by crying, smiling, laughing and screaming. However, with the development of language and other communication skills, they learn to talk about their feelings and use gestures, drawing, pretend play, dance and other ways of expressing their emotions and feelings.

### • Teach self control

Children must learn to control and manage their own behaviour if they are to become responsible adults. This takes time and requires adult support. Parents can help when they give children opportunities to make simple choices and to experience the consequences. For example, "Do you want to play with your friends or help me in the garden?" The child will see that if he or she chooses to play, then he or she cannot also help you in the garden at the same time. Another simple choice could be, "Do you want to wear your blue t-shirt or your red t-shirt today?" By making a decision about what he or she wears, the child will feel he or she has more control and this will boost his or her confidence. Remember that both of the options you give the child must be acceptable to you. If you offer a child a choice such as "Do you want to go to school today or play at home?" you have to be prepared to accept it if the child chooses to play at home.

### • Teach children to solve problems

By the time children are about three years of age children you can help them learn to solve simple problems. For example, if she or he wants a toy another child has and hits the other child, talk through the problem with the aggressive child and help him or her find a non-aggressive solution. This solution might be to find another toy for one or both of the children, or for the child to talk to the other child and ask if they could both take turns in playing with the toy, say for five minutes each, then waiting until the other child's time is up (an adult can help by keeping the time and by reminding the children of their agreement when the time comes to give the toy to the other child).

### • 'Time out' for children

This can be an effective strategy for helping children regain self control when they have "tantrums" or are very angry. However, this strategy must be used very carefully and not with children under two years of age as they are too young to understand.

The strategy involves telling the child why you are unhappy with his or her behaviour and having the child sit, alone, for a few minutes (no more than five minutes). The child could sit where they want to or you could designate a special 'time out area' of the room. But if it is not possible for them to calm down when they are in the same room as you, you could ask them to sit in a separate room, if safe. When the child has calmed down tell him or her it is all right to go and play again.

Alternatively, you might choose to ask the child if he/she wants to help you with a task you are doing, such as preparing dinner. This would show the child that you still love him or her, and want to spend time with him or her, despite the bad behaviour.

### • 'Time out' for parents

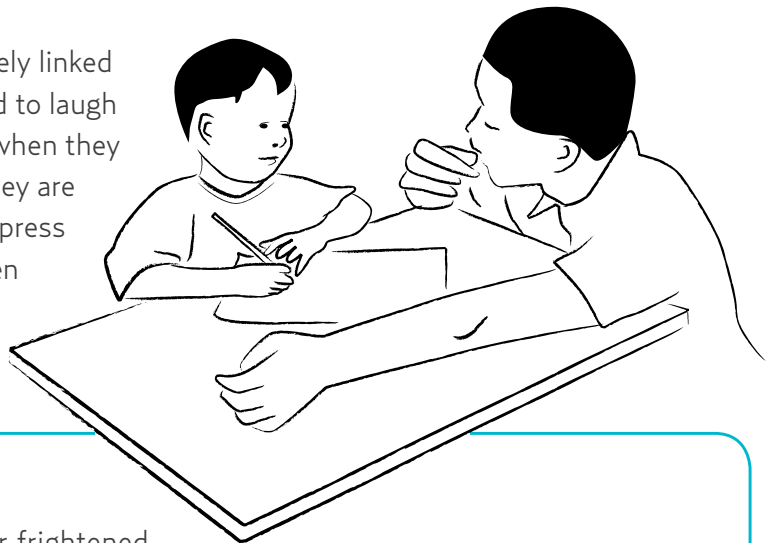
Young children's behaviour can sometimes be very challenging. It is natural for parents to feel upset and angry at times, but they must control any inclination to strike or harm the child. If you feel you are getting out of control take a 'time out' for yourself, calm down, and then respond to the child's behaviour.

## GETTING HELP

If you are worried about your child's behaviour, and the general strategies suggested here do not work, then you should seek help. The earlier you get help the better for both you and your child.

## YOUNG CHILDREN AND FEELINGS

The behaviour of young children is closely linked to their feelings. For example, they tend to laugh when they are happy, cling to an adult when they are frightened and shout or hit when they are angry. Children should be allowed to express these emotions. Adults can help children learn to manage their behaviour by showing them safe and acceptable ways to express how they feel.



### • Talk to children

If children seem to be sad or angry or frightened, talk to them. Reassure them that it's all right to feel angry, but that they must not hurt others. Often they don't have the words to tell you how they feel, so offer them other ways of expressing the feeling. For example, tell them that when they feel angry they can say, "I feel very angry!"

### • Drawing and painting

Engaging in art activities can help children to release their emotions, and to use colours and shapes to express how they feel. Include black in the colours you provide, as children often use black to express bad feelings. Encourage them to talk about their drawings and paintings, so that you will be aware of how they are feeling and can offer them comfort if they are sad, frightened or angry.



### • Dough and clay

Playing with dough or clay helps children release tension and they can use it to make shapes that represent their feelings.

### • Sand and water

Playing with these materials can be very soothing and can help calm children if they are upset.

### • Music and movement

Listening to music can relax and calm children. You can play various kinds of music (happy music, sad music and so on) and ask children to move in the way the music makes them feel.



### • Drama or pretend play

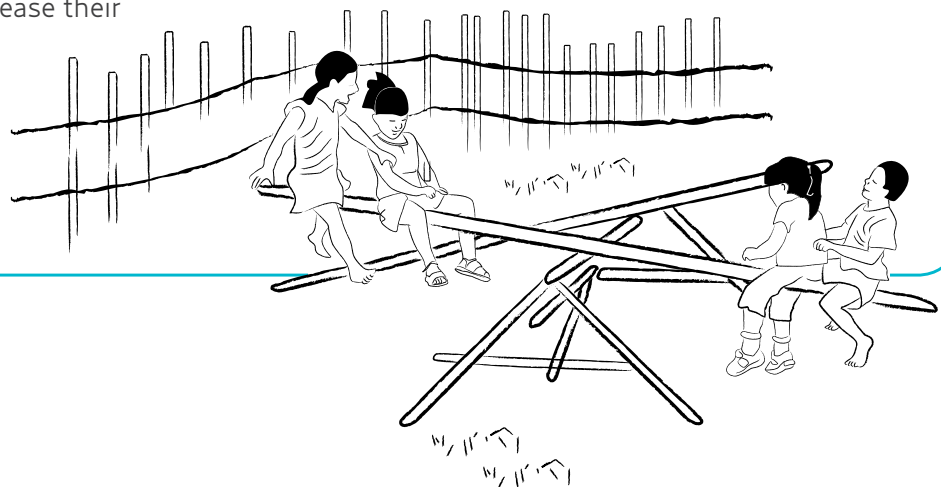
Children express many emotions during pretend play. As long as children are not hurting others, let them play out their feelings.

### • Stories

It can be very helpful to read or tell a story about the feeling a child is showing. For example, if a child is sad, read or make up a story about a little child who was sad, and how she or he got over it. The child will probably ask you to read or tell the story over and over again.

### • Physical activity

Little children are active and need to move. They are likely to get bored and to misbehave if asked to sit still for very long. Letting them run outside or have some rough-and-tumble play will help them release their tension. If this isn't possible, at least give them something to do while they are indoors.





## Activity Sheet: Behaviour that concerns me

WHAT THE CHILD DOES	AGE OF THE CHILD	HOW I RESPOND	ANOTHER STRATEGY I CAN TRY	WHAT HAPPENED

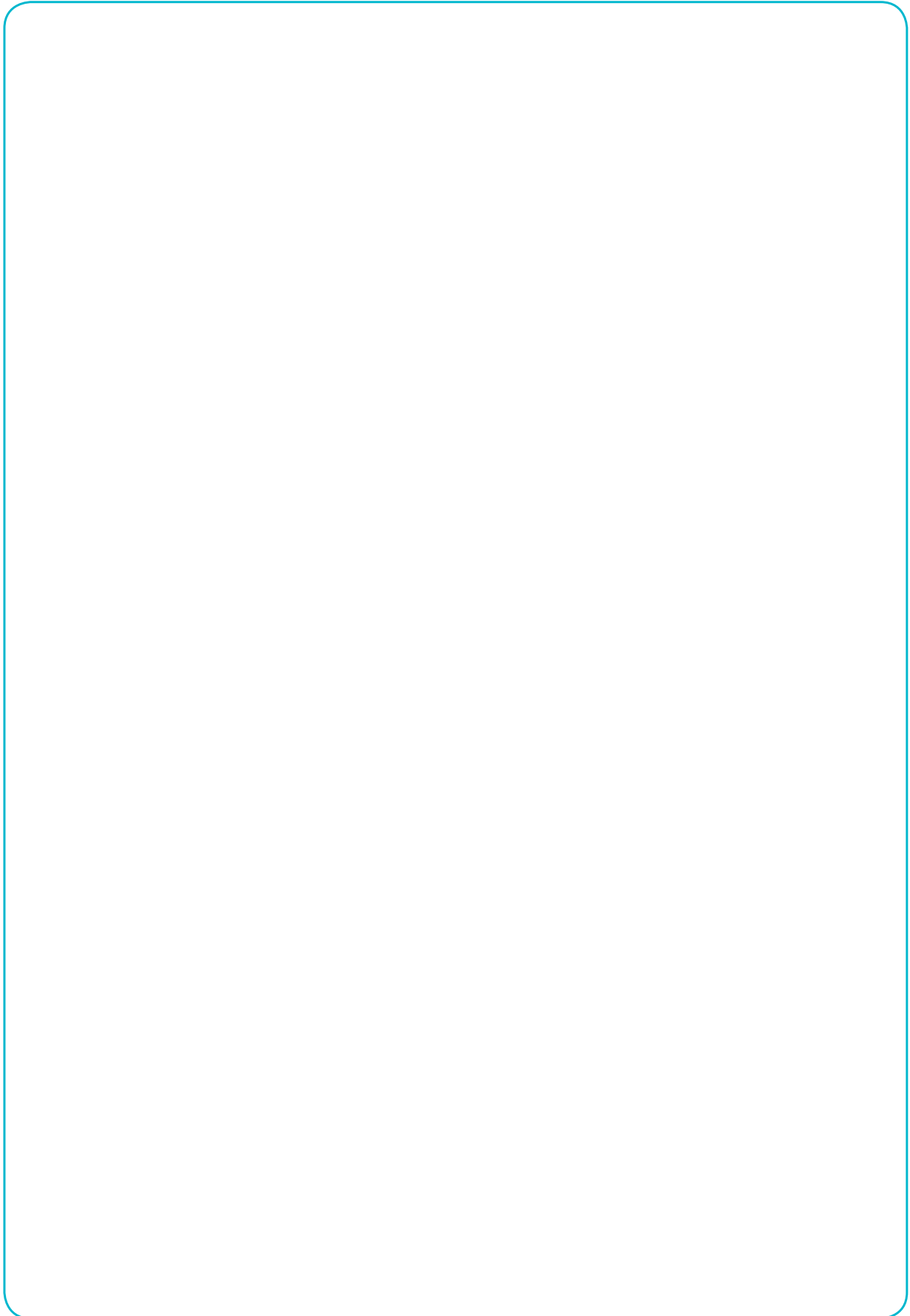


## Resources and services available in the community

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## NOTES



Booklet 7: **Young Children's Behaviour**

This booklet gives information on young children's behaviour and what behaviour is reasonable to expect at different ages. The importance of using positive approaches rather than harsh punishment is emphasized, and many positive strategies are provided in this booklet. Having a good relationship with children is emphasized as the first step.



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# Children with Disabilities

Booklet 8



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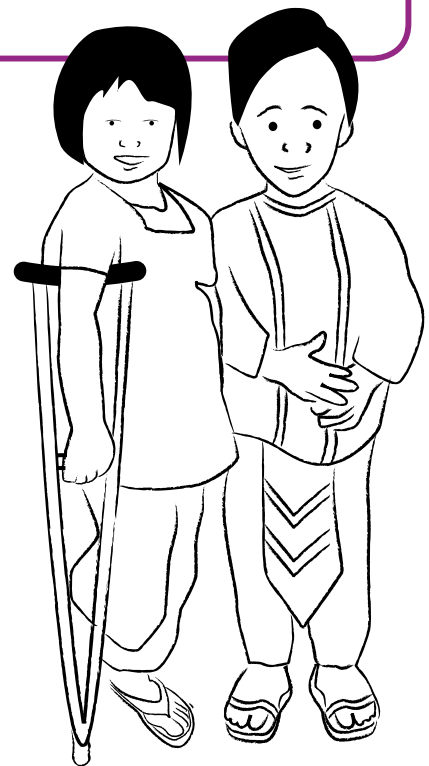
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# Children with Disabilities

**Every child is special. Each is born with particular features and qualities, and into a family situation that will influence what the child becomes. Support from the family and wider community is necessary if the child is to fully develop his or her abilities. This is particularly true for children who are born with a physical or mental condition that disables them in some way. Perhaps they cannot walk or talk properly, or they have fits, or are slow learners. While many children have special needs, in this booklet we focus on those children who have disabilities or who are at risk of developing disabilities.**

HAVING A DISABILITY often means that children are treated differently. The way they are treated depends a lot on the beliefs in the community or culture about those who are different. These beliefs may cause the family to feel shame, fear or guilt because of their child. They may see the child as worthless or as a burden and, as a result, may hide, neglect or even abandon the child. Young children with disabilities who are treated this way, or who are teased because of their disability, soon learn to see themselves as worthless. This affects their self confidence, and may cause them to develop many serious long-term social and behavioural problems. On the other hand, if children with disabilities are accepted and when treated with respect, they grow up as part of the community and will develop to the best of their ability, regardless of their starting point.



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think about people with disabilities? How do people in your community treat a child who is different, perhaps because he or she limps, learns slowly, stammers or sometimes has fits?



## FACTS ABOUT DISABILITIES

Many children around the world are born with some condition that affects their development. If you have a child with a disability, you are not alone. It is something that can affect every family – the richest and the poorest.

There are many reasons why children may be born with or develop a disability: Parents can pass down a disease or condition or things could go wrong while the baby is in the womb, during birth or soon after birth. Often disabilities are caused by factors that parents' cannot control but to minimize the chances of disability, it is important for women to be fully immunized, to eat a nutritious and balanced diet, and to stay healthy when they are pregnant. They should also have regular health checkups before and after the birth. Of course, some children are born healthy and develop a disability later. Such disabilities are often a result of accidents, infections, or simply not getting enough good food.

## IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

Parents usually know at birth or soon after, if their child is not developing properly. Parents might notice things just by watching their children during normal daily activities or when they are playing. Parents can often identify signs of possible developmental problems by observing how babies and young children respond to sounds, touch, eye contact, toys and other people. Sometimes, however, the problem is not obvious. Regular health check-ups help identify any problems.

It is important to remember that children develop at different rates and may be more advanced in some areas of development than in others. Parents should become aware of what is normal in their culture or community. If they suspect something is wrong they should seek help from a trained medical person such as a health worker. A doctor or a nurse can do some tests and advise parents on the problem and what to do about it.

Getting help as soon as possible is important. This can improve the child's chances of recovery or reduce the effects of the disability. This is also true for health problems that come and go, such as ear infections and skin infections. These affect children's behaviour and interfere with their development and learning. For example, children who often have colds or ear infections will have times when they cannot hear properly. They get behind at school because of this and may also have behavioural problems.

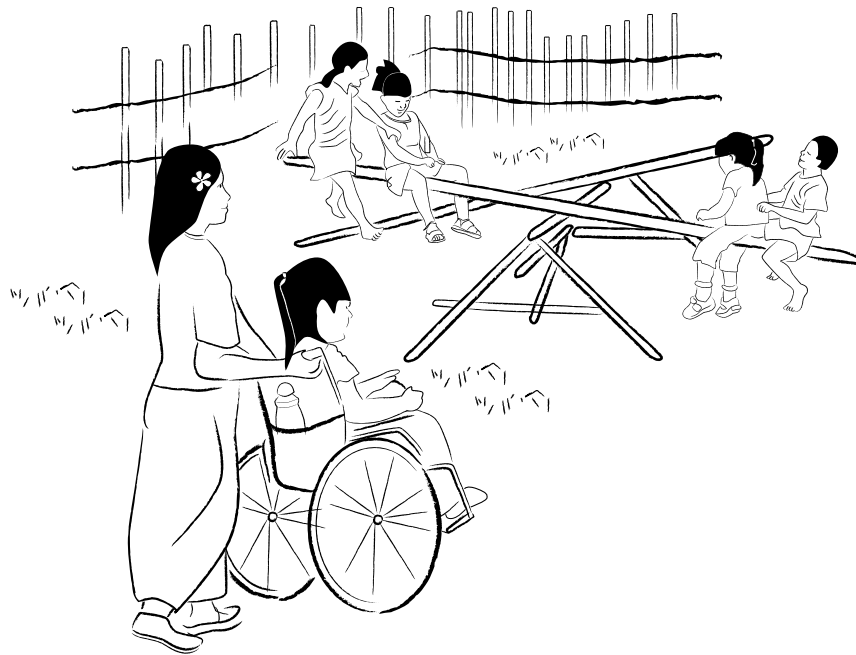
## INCLUDING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN DAILY LIFE

Babies and young children with disabilities have the same needs, feelings and emotions as all other children. They have the same rights as every other child: birth registration, immunizations, nutritious food, education and protection from abuse and violence.

Babies and young children with disabilities should not be shut away from other people. They should be included in everyday family and community life and have opportunities to play with other children. With proper support, children with disabilities can learn to manage their disability and can grow into adults who participate fully in society.

Having a child with a disability can be challenging for parents. It makes a big difference if the community accepts and supports the family without any biases. It also helps if parents can look beyond the disability and think about the holistic development of their child. Although

a child may have a disability in one area of development, she or he may have strengths and abilities in other areas. For example, many children with physical disabilities have no problems with learning. Some may even have particular talents. Even children who have a limited mental capacity are able to learn. Many may also be physically strong and healthy and able to perform normal household tasks, if adults take time to teach them.



### SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

It is possible to improve the condition of all babies and young children with disabilities if something is done about the problem early – as soon as after birth if possible. This does not necessarily require special services. Loving parents and families can do a lot. So can the community. It is important to help children do things for themselves and become active participants in their community and culture, just like any other child. Below are a few basic suggestions:

#### • Love and care

Loving and caring for your “special” baby is the most important thing you can do. As for all babies, forming a close bond to its mother and other caregivers is critical for the baby’s health and development.

#### • Wait until your child is ready

Do not push your child to do things. Each skill builds on another, just like building blocks. Regardless of the child’s age, he or she must develop the same skills and in the same order as every other child. So:

- **Observe your child and work out what developmental stage your child is at.**
- **Find out what the next step forward is.**
- **Provide some activities to help your child develop the new skill.**

**The community health worker can help you with this.**

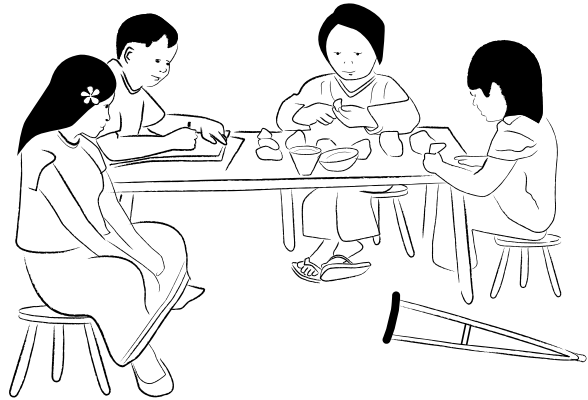


### • Encourage a child's strengths

Accept the child's weaknesses (or disability) and develop his or her strengths. Look at what the child can do and encourage their special abilities. Try not to feel sorry for the child just because he or she has a disability.

### • Let your child play with other children

Children with disabilities benefit greatly from playing with other children. They learn more if they play with able-bodied children who are younger than them in age but at the same developmental level. This is also good for children without disabilities as they can learn early to respect individual differences and to help others who need support.



### • Encourage self-help skills

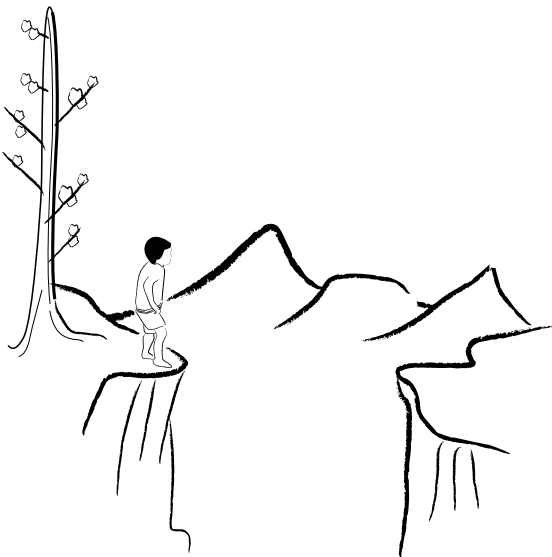
Encourage your child to do as much as possible by himself or herself. Parents in a way, can prevent children from developing skills (e.g. feeding or dressing themselves) if they treat them as babies and do everything for them. It is better to teach children how to do things for themselves, and to give help where it is needed.

### • Adapt the home

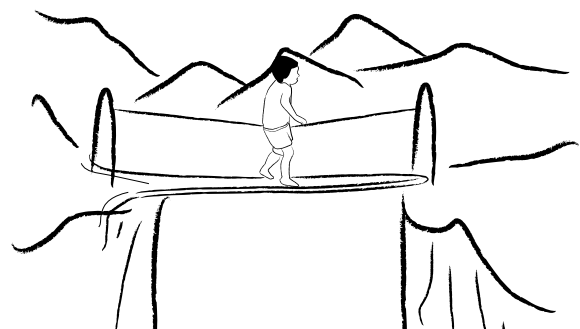
Families can look around the home, and the outdoor surroundings and think of changes they could make to help the child with a disability to move around and enjoy as normal a home life as possible.

### • Have a routine for doing activities with the child

If your life is very busy, try having a particular time each day when you play special games and do activities with your child. This way you know that every day you are helping your child develop the skills he or she needs.



*Trying to make your child walk before he is ready is like telling him 'JUMP NOW!'*



*when what you need to do is help him cross the gap - step-by-step.*

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

All over the world, communities are taking action to help children with disabilities. Below are some of the things that are happening with regards to support from communities:

- Communities form committees to identify and assist local children and adults with disabilities. Such committees include health workers, and people with disabilities and people without.
- Committee members are then trained in how to provide services and to support children with disabilities, and their families.
- The committee members generally work with families and teach them how to best support their own children with disabilities.
- Workshops are often set up in which local craftspeople learn how to make aids, such as crutches and braces, for persons with disabilities. They also help others develop these craft skills. They need tools to do this work, but most of the materials can be found locally.
- Local able-bodied children take part in programmes to help children who have disabilities by playing and working with those children. They are sometimes also involved in making toys for babies and young children with disabilities. Children with disabilities can often also be involved in this. In some countries, making toys has led to small business ventures in which toys are made and sold to bring in money for the community.

**MAKE A BOOK FOR A SPECIAL CHILD**

Any child will feel very special if you make a book about him or her. Take photos, draw pictures or cut out things such as a picture of their favourite food. Make a separate page for each item and write a short simple sentence underneath. When finished, read it to the child.



Our goal should always be to open doors  
for the child, not to close them.

## Activity Sheet

WHAT I BELIEVE / KNOW	WHAT I WANT TO FIND OUT	WHAT I HAVE LEARNED



## Resources and services available in the community

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners and a light purple background, intended for users to list resources and services available in their community.



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## NOTES

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• **Booklet 8: Children with Disabilities**

• This booklet calls on families and communities to  
• respect all children and include everyone in family  
• and community life. It focuses on children with  
• disabilities and offers many ideas for supporting  
• young children with disabilities.



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# Going to School

Booklet 9



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# Going to School

**Starting school is an important step for every child. All boys and girls should start school at the age approved in their country. This is usually between 5 and 7 years of age.**

IT IS AN EXCITING TIME FOR CHILDREN, but it can also be a time of great stress and anxiety as children move to an unknown environment. Even if they have been in preschool or kindergarten, the move to school is a big step.

For many children it is all too much. They drop out of school very early. Does it surprise you that the biggest drop out occurs in Grade 1, followed by Grade 2? In many developing countries, at least half the children who enrol in Grade 1 either drop out or repeat Grade 1.

What is the situation in your community? At what age can children go to school? Do all parents enrol their children in school at this age? Do most girls and boys complete primary school? If not, when do they drop out and why?

School should be a happy and successful experience for children. This booklet looks at some of the ways parents and others in the community can help children to enjoy school and therefore remain in school.

## PARENTS AS THE FIRST TEACHERS

A child's right to education begins at birth. But this does not mean sending your babies off to school! Education is not just about going to school. It is about having opportunities to develop and learn throughout life. Parents provide these opportunities from the moment their baby is born as they hold, touch, talk to and play with their baby. The strong bond that develops between the baby and parents provides the foundation for all later learning and development. The parents are the child's first teachers.

In the early years, parents can offer their children many experiences that support learning. Even parents who have few resources and who have had little or no schooling can give their children a good start to school.





They can encourage learning at home through, for example, reading and telling stories, singing, playing games with numbers and letters, drawing, painting, and encouraging their children to play with other children and explore interesting places and materials.

We know that children who attend good quality early childhood programmes do better at school. Parents are urged to use these services if they are available. They should be careful, however, when choosing a programme. A good quality programme is not formal and academic, but is one in which children learn through play and are involved in interesting and challenging activities and experiences, with other children and adults.

### BEING SUCCESSFUL AT SCHOOL

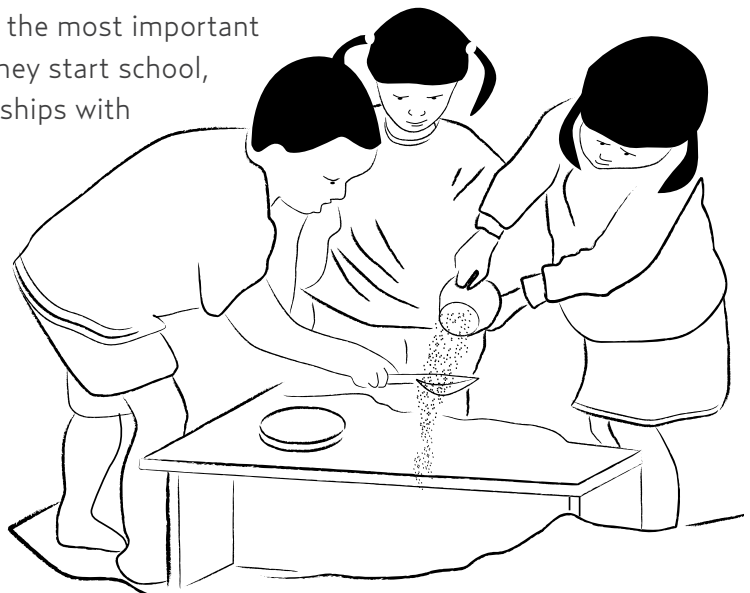
Why do so many young children drop out of school or fail? Little children love learning. Remember the baby at birth? His or her brain is already very developed and just waiting to be turned on. Something goes wrong for many children in the first five or six years. What do children need to be successful at school?

#### • They need to be healthy

Good health and nutrition are essential for enjoying and being successful at school. Poor nutrition in the early years affects brain development; this affects children's ability to think and learn. Malnourished children are likely to have trouble paying attention; they are less active and may be less able to control their emotions. All this can lead to behavioural problems and "getting into trouble" at school. A child in this situation will soon lose interest in school and may drop out. Likewise, children who are often sick miss out on lessons and fall behind. They can also find school very unattractive, and may learn very little when they are there.

#### • They need to be able to make friends and enjoy playing with other children

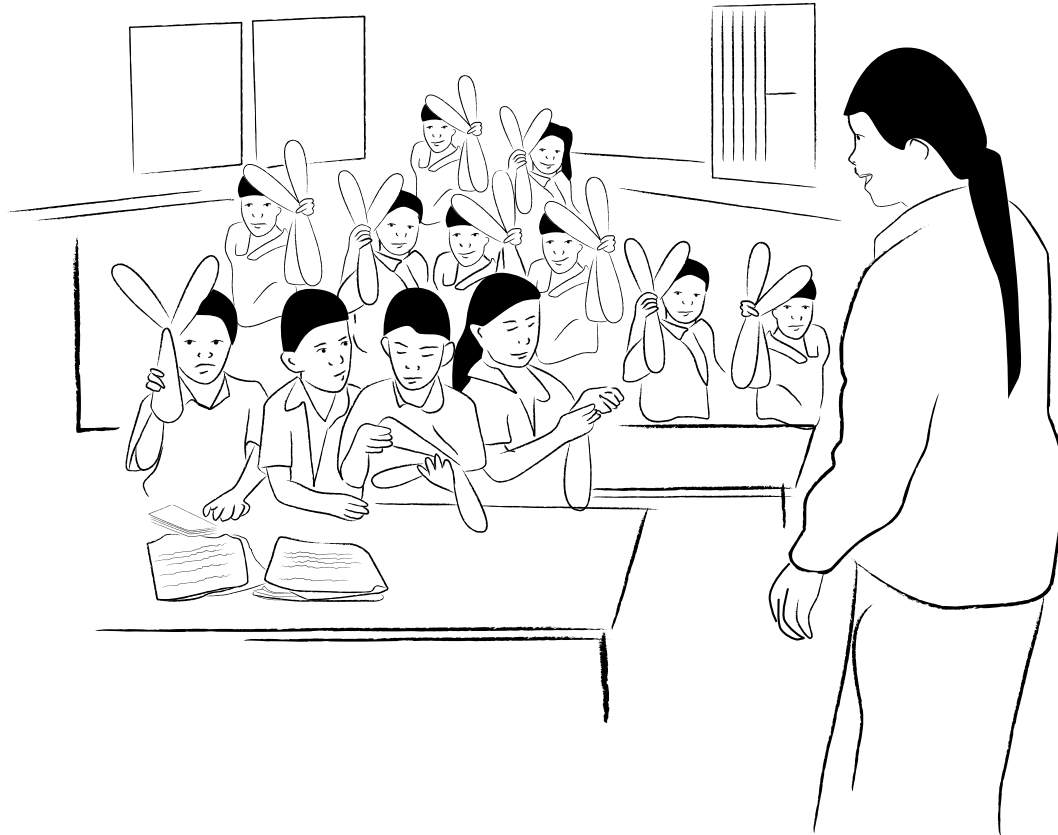
For many young children, having friends is the most important thing about going to school. By the time they start school, children should be able to develop relationships with children and adults outside the family.





## • They need to enjoy learning

A healthy young child is naturally curious and eager to find out about everything around him or her. If this curiosity has been nurtured, that is, if the child has been encouraged to explore and play with materials, and has had adults talking to him or her and answering his or her questions, then the child will love learning and will thrive in a good school environment.



## WHAT DO CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW AND TO BE ABLE TO DO WHEN THEY START SCHOOL?

Children are expected to be able to do many things when they start school. We look at these below, and give some suggestions for how parents can help.

WHAT DO CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO WHEN THEY START SCHOOL?	HOW PARENTS CAN HELP
<p><b><i>Social and emotional skills</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interact positively with other children and adults.</li> <li>• Follow rules.</li> <li>• Take turns.</li> <li>• Cooperate.</li> <li>• Share equipment.</li> <li>• Consider others.</li> <li>• Control their behaviour reasonably well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strong bond or relationship with your child from birth.</li> <li>• Encourage your child to play often with other children, especially from about 3 years of age.</li> <li>• When arguments occur during play, let children learn to sort it out themselves, if possible.</li> <li>• Play games in which children have to take turns and share.</li> <li>• Set simple rules for your child to follow at home.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Self-help skills</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care of themselves – toilet use, dressing, eating, etc.</li> <li>• Take care of their belongings.</li> <li>• Keep safe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach children how to use the toilet, wash their hands, brush their teeth, dress themselves, etc.</li> <li>• If they take a bag or lunch box to school, practice using these, and opening and closing them, before the child starts school.</li> <li>• Write your child's name on all school items and clothing.</li> <li>• Talk to your child about what to do if they are bullied or in danger from other people.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Physical skills</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take part in games at school – running, throwing, catching, kicking, etc.</li> <li>• Hold a pencil properly.</li> <li>• Use scissors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play games with your child that develop the child's physical skills such as running, jumping, throwing and catching.</li> <li>• Give your child activities which strengthen the fingers and hands; e.g. using tongs to pick up small items, playing with dough.</li> </ul>

WHAT DO CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO WHEN THEY START SCHOOL?	HOW PARENTS CAN HELP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold crayons and paint brushes properly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage many opportunities for your child to use crayons and paint brushes (thick ones if possible).</li> <li>• Teach your child how to hold and use scissors and give lots of practice using small scissors with blunt tips.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Language skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen carefully.</li> <li>• Speak clearly.</li> <li>• Use words to express themselves.</li> <li>• Many teachers will also expect children to be able to write their name.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have conversations with your child, asking and answering questions, and taking turns.</li> <li>• Tell or read stories and have your child tell them to you.</li> <li>• Listen to music together and talk about it.</li> <li>• Play listening games; e.g. whispering games, identifying sounds in the house or outside.</li> <li>• Give simple instructions for your child to follow. Try not to repeat instructions; in this way you are training your child to listen.</li> <li>• Get help early if you think your child is not hearing well.</li> </ul> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your child to talk and use new words. Ask questions and listen to the child's answers.</li> <li>• Be careful not to correct your child's language mistakes too much; this could make him or her less confident about talking.</li> <li>• Provide many activities and games that encourage the child to talk, such as puppets, stories, role play and walks around the community.</li> <li>• Make your own books about your child's experiences using photos or illustrations.</li> </ul>

WHAT DO CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO WHEN THEY START SCHOOL?	HOW PARENTS CAN HELP
<p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of number words.</li> <li>• Understand some spatial words such as under, behind, near, on top of, next to.</li> <li>• Sort objects into groups that are the same or different.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sing rhymes and songs with number words in them. Even babies enjoy these.</li> <li>• Give children blocks of different shapes and sizes to play with.</li> <li>• Use number words when you talk to children or give them instructions.</li> <li>• Count with your child when you are together; e.g. climbing stairs, gathering the eggs.</li> <li>• Encourage your child to sort objects – vegetables, leaves, shells, anything! Talk about how the objects are the same or different.</li> <li>• Play games in which your child has to go under or behind objects; this way he or she gets to hear and understand these words.</li> </ul>

**As the time to go to school draws closer, parents and families can prepare the child by:**

- Visiting the school with the child.
- Talking positively to the child about school.

**Once the child starts school, parents can:**

- Talk to the child about school and show interest in what he or she is learning.
- Get involved in the school.
- Support Grade 1 and 2 teachers who encourage play and active learning in their classrooms. The child will learn much this way.

**A popular counting song in English:**

**Five little ducks**

*Five little ducks went out one day  
Over the hill and far away  
Mother duck said,  
"Quack, quack, quack, quack,"  
but only four little ducks came back.*

*Four little ducks went out one day  
Over the hill and far away  
Mother duck said,  
"Quack, quack, quack, quack,"  
but only three little ducks came back.*

*(And so on until none of the ducks come back.)*

*Mother duck went out one day  
Over the hill and far away  
Mother duck said,  
"Quack, quack, quack, quack,"  
and all of her little ducks came back.*

## HOW SCHOOLS CAN HELP

Not all children get to school ready to learn. Some have not had opportunities to develop the skills and behaviours mentioned before. Grade 1 teachers have a very big task helping these and all children develop their potential. If they can build on the skills and knowledge that each child brings to school, then every child can experience success. They will become confident, will enjoy school and become successful learners. Grade 1 teachers cannot do this alone. The whole school needs to support young children as they begin school.

### Here are some ways schools can help:

- Get to know the children before they start school.
  - Invite them and their parents to visit the school.
  - Do some home visits.
  - Visit the preschool, if there is one.
- Make sure the school gives equal access to all children.
- Put very good, experienced and enthusiastic teachers in Grades 1 and 2.
- Encourage play and active learning in the school.
- Use the child's mother tongue (first language), at least during the settling in period.
- Teach what is meaningful and matches the developmental level of the children.
- Encourage parents to get involved in the classroom and in school activities.

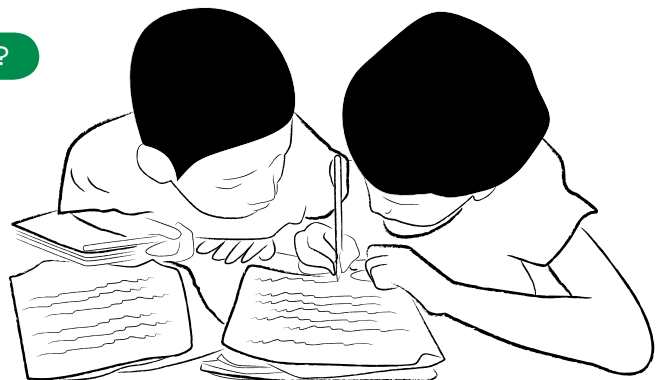
## HOW COMMUNITIES CAN HELP

Community leaders and authorities can support young learners by:

- Making the school, and attending school, important concerns for the whole community.
- Ensuring the school is a safe and welcoming place for children.
- Ensuring the school has the resources it needs, including teachers in Grade 1 and 2 who understand and enjoy being with young children, and suitable teaching and play materials for the teachers.
- Being involved in school management and parent-teacher associations.
- Supporting the development of a preschool or kindergarten that children can attend the year before school.
- Setting up a playgroup for younger children and their parents.

## WHAT SHOULD CHILDREN LEARN IN GRADE 1?

Most schools have a curriculum. This is a programme of what children are expected to learn in each grade. Do you know what your children are learning at school this year and right now? Parents should know what this is so that they and others in the family can help their children at home.



Learning is a bit like building a house. If you lay a strong foundation the house will be strong and will stand up to bad weather and other misfortunes. In the preschool years and the early years of school you are laying the foundation for all later learning. If the foundation is strong, children will experience success in learning at school and throughout life.

You might be asking, "How do I do this?" Below is a method for building a strong foundation for children's learning.

#### BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING

- Start with a supportive family and school.
- Throw in lots of activities that encourage children to think.
- Add interesting experiences and things to look at and talk about.
- Use very limited amounts of rote learning.
- Dribble everything with language.
- Mix with a good and experienced teacher.
- Pour it into a lively classroom.
- Have caring and attentive adults check often that everything is progressing well.

Learning to read is an important task for all children in the first few years of school. Children who cannot read and write get left behind after this because later school learning depends on being able to read. Most children will have more success if they learn to read in their mother tongue. Children must also learn basic mathematical and problem-solving skills. This should not be at the expense of other learning such as art and music. A good teacher can add reading, writing and mathematics to everything.

#### HOW DO YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN?

Young children learn best through play, by interaction with other people and materials, and by having real and meaningful experiences. They do not learn well by sitting at a desk all day, being forced to write and do things they are not yet ready for. This style of teaching can be very boring for a young and active child.

Of course, children also learn a lot by watching their elders; for example, weaving a basket. They still need to practice the skill before they can use it, however, and they will need good physical skills before they can do it well. The same goes for learning to read. They need to build up many skills before they can perform this task well.

They need lots of practice. Parents and teachers provide this throughout the early years through talking, telling and reading stories, singing, and daily activities that require children to interact with each other in playful learning.



**WORKING TOGETHER**

If all boys and girls begin school at the right age, attend regularly, enjoy learning and stay at school until they have received a good education, it is in the best interests of everyone.

Children are more likely to succeed at school when parents, schools and communities work together. Early childhood services such as kindergartens and preschools should be included in this partnership. By working together they can make going to school a happy occasion for all children.





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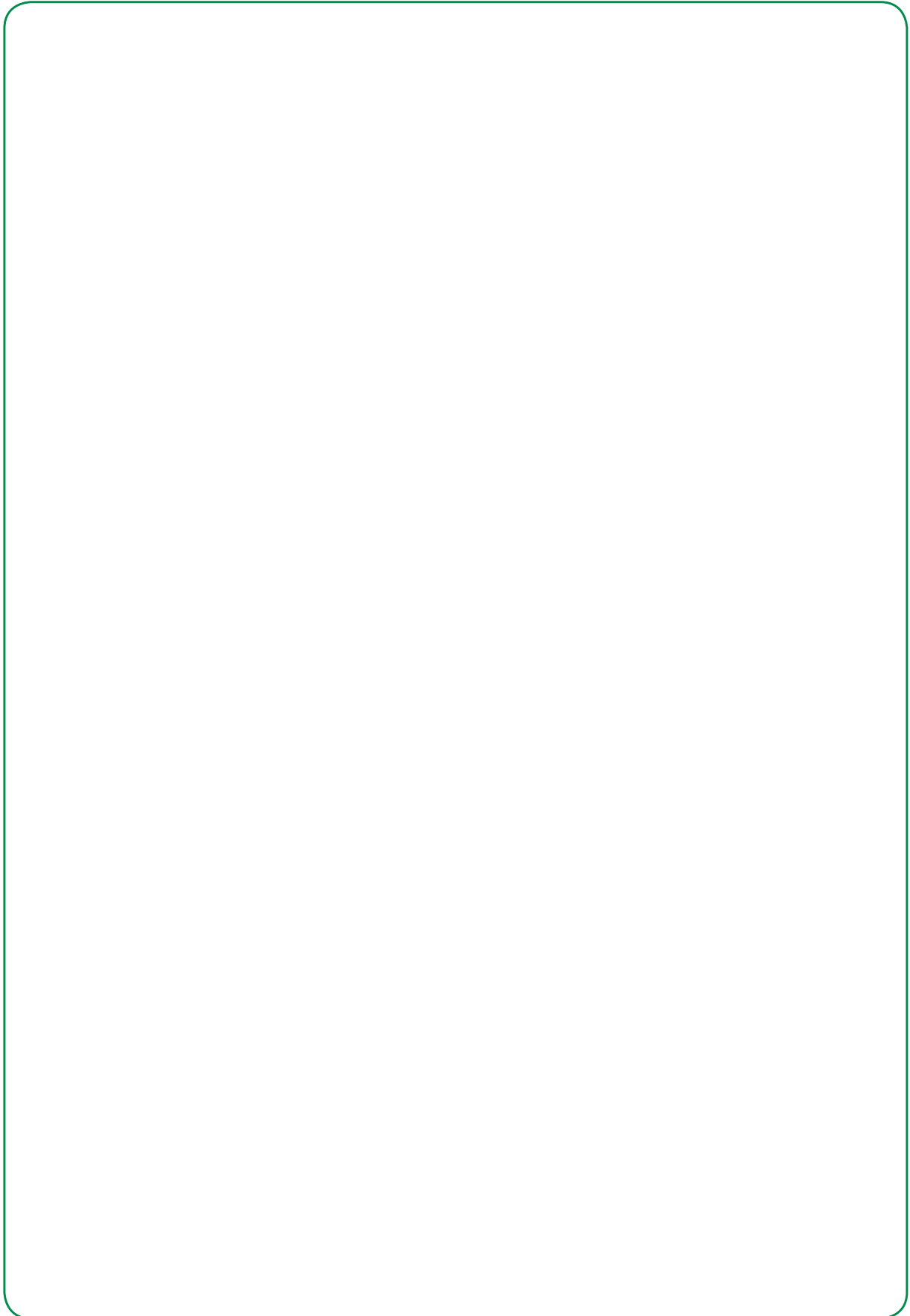
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## NOTES



: **Booklet 9: Going to School**

: Beginning school is an important step for all young  
: children. In this booklet suggestions are given for how  
: parents, families and others in the community can work  
: together to make school a successful and enjoyable  
: experience for all young children.



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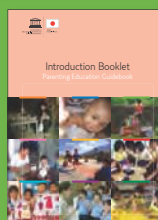
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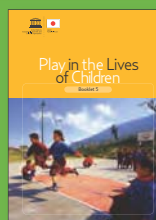
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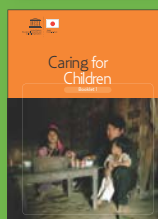
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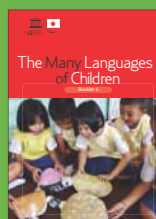
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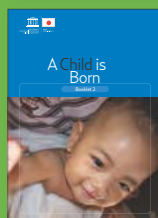
BOOKLET 5  
Play in the Lives of Children



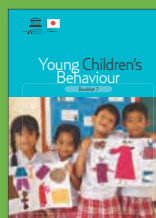
BOOKLET 1  
Caring for Children



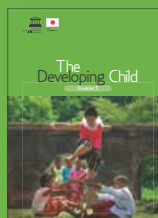
BOOKLET 6  
The Many Languages  
of Children



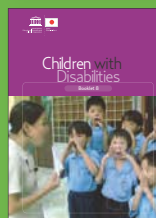
BOOKLET 2  
A Child is Born



BOOKLET 7  
Young Children's Behaviour



BOOKLET 3  
The Developing Child



BOOKLET 8  
Children with Disabilities



BOOKLET 4  
Health and Nutrition



BOOKLET 9  
Going to School



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