

Points to remember...



Children have the right to life, survival, and development. Early care and learning helps to start children on the path to develop their full potential.

Every child must have a good start in life with a nurturing, caring, and safe environment – to survive, be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent, and able to learn.

A child's survival, growth and development depend on the care and nurturing the child receives within the family and community. Parents are their first teachers.

The most important stage in child development is the period between gestation to 6 years, with rapid motor, cognitive, sensory, social and emotional development during the birth to 3 year period.

Family counselling on care helps mothers, fathers, and other caregivers support their child's healthy development. The quality of caregiver interaction with a child can affect child survival and development.

Providing timely early intervention and support for children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families can prevent their difficulties from becoming more severe – helping to reach their full potential and avoid increased poverty and exclusion.



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Recommendations for Care for Child Development

COUNSELLING CARDS - Short Form

NEWBORN, BIRTH UP TO 1 WEEK

Your baby learns from birth



Provide ways for your baby to see, hear, move arms and legs freely, and touch you. Gently soothe, stroke and hold your child. Skin to skin is good.

1 WEEK UP TO 6 MONTHS



Provide ways for your child to see, hear, feel, move freely, and touch you. Slowly move colourful things for your child to see and reach for. *Sample toys: shaker rattle, big ring on a string.*

6 MONTHS UP TO 9 MONTHS



Give your child clean, safe household things to handle, bang, and drop. *Sample toys: containers with lids, metal pot and spoon.*

9 MONTHS UP TO 12 MONTHS



Hide a child's favourite toy under a cloth or box. See if the child can find it. Play peek-a-boo.

12 MONTHS UP TO 2 YEARS



Give your child things to stack up, and to put into containers and take out. *Sample toys: Nesting and stacking objects, container and clothes clips.*

2 YEARS AND OLDER



Help your child count, name and compare things. Make simple toys for your child. *Sample toys: Objects of different colours and shapes to sort, stick or chalk board, puzzle.*

PLAY

COMMUNICATE



Look into baby's eyes and talk to your baby. When you are breastfeeding is a good time. Even a newborn baby sees your face and hears your voice.



Smile and laugh with your child. Talk to your child. Get a conversation going by copying your child's sounds or gestures.



Respond to your child's sounds and interests. Call the child's name, and see your child respond.



Tell your child the names of things and people. Show your child how to say things with hands, like "bye bye". *Sample toy: doll with face.*



Ask your child simple questions. Respond to your child's attempts to talk. Show and talk about nature, pictures and things.



Encourage your child to talk and answer your child's questions. Teach your child stories, songs and games. Talk about pictures or books. *Sample toy: book with pictures.*

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1 WEEK

6 MONTHS

9 MONTHS

12 MONTHS

2 YEARS

- Give your child **affection** and show your **love**
- Be aware of your child's **interests** and respond to them
- Praise your child for trying to learn new **skills**

3

Counsel the Family about Problems in Care for Child Development

COUNSELLING CARDS - Short Form

If the mother does not breastfeed, counsel the mother, father or caregiver to:

- Hold the child close when feeding, look at the child, and talk or sing to the child.

If caregivers do not know what the child does to play or communicate:

- Remind caregivers that children play and communicate from birth.
- Explain that play is one important way children learn and develop.
- Demonstrate how the child responds to activities

If caregivers feel too burdened or stressed to play and communicate with the child:

- Listen to the caregivers feelings, and help them identify a key person who can share their feelings and help them with their child
- Build their confidence by demonstrating their ability to carry out a simple activity.
- Encourage fathers to get involved.
- Refer caregivers to a local service, if needed and available.

If caregivers feel that they do not have time to play and communicate with the child:

- Encourage them to combine play and communication activities with other care for the child.
- Explain how they can arrange the child's environment to play, communicate and learn near them while they work at home.
- Ask other family members to help care for the child or help with chores.

If caregivers have no toys for the child to play with, counsel them to:

- Use any household objects that are clean and safe.
- Make simple toys.
- Play with the child. The child will learn by playing with the caregivers and other people.
- Avoid spending limited family budgets for store-bought toys.

If the child is not responding, or seems slow:

- Ask caregiver and observe to see whether the child has problems seeing or hearing. Check if unsure.
- Encourage the family to do extra play and communication activities with the child.
- Encourage the family to play and communicate with the child through touch and movement, as well as through language.
- Refer the child with difficulties to special services – along with providing information and encouragement to caregivers.

If the mother or father has to leave the child with someone else for a period of time:

- Identify at last one adequate or prepared person who can care for the child regularly, and give the child love and attention.
- Get the child used to being with the new person gradually.
- Encourage parents to spend time with the child when possible.

If it seems that the child is being treated harshly:

- Try to understand what might be the stressful situation in the family that causes the possible harsh treatment.
- Ask the caregiver who normally disciplines the child and how.
- Explain that all children need discipline in certain moments to teach self-control, but that physical and verbal punishment is not appropriate.
- Recommend ways for dealing with the child in stressful situations.
 - Encourage the family to pay attention and play with the child when calm and happy, and not just when there is bad behaviour.
 - Look for many opportunities to praise the child for good behaviour.
 - Give the child choices about what to do, instead of saying "don't".
 - Try to understand why the child is crying, sad or angry and respect their feelings. During the early months, crying is one of the main tools for young children to communicate with caregivers on how they feel.
 - With tantrums, the baby is often trying to communicate how they feel. Remain calm, wait it out, and try to understand what is bothering your child. Do not let your child's behavior cause you to lose control.



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CHECKLIST for Counselling on Care for Child Development

SHORT FORM

CHECKLIST for Counselling on Care for Child Development (generic short form)

Date / / | (DAY) | (MONTH) | (YEAR) | Completed by

Child's name: First Family Age: Years / Months Boy / Girl

Caregiver's name: Relationship: Mother / Father / Other:

Address, Community:

1. Identify practices to support the child's development and counsel the caregiver

Look	Praise the caregiver if caregiver:	Advise the caregiver and solve problems if caregiver:
How does the caregiver show he or she is aware of child's movement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Moves towards and with child, and talks to or makes sounds with child.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not move with child, or controls child's movement: Ask caregiver to copy child's movements, to follow child's lead.
How does the caregiver comfort the child and show love?	<input type="checkbox"/> Looks into child's eyes and talks softly to child, gently touches child or holds child closely.	<input type="checkbox"/> Is not able to comfort child, and child does not look to caregiver comfort: Help caregiver look into child's eyes, gently talk to child and hold child.
How does the caregiver correct the child?	<input type="checkbox"/> Distracts child from unwanted actions with appropriate toy or activity.	<input type="checkbox"/> Scolds child: Help caregiver distract child from unwanted actions by giving alternative toy or activity.
Ask and listen	Praise the caregiver if caregiver:	Advise the caregiver and solve problem if caregiver:
How do you play with your baby?	<input type="checkbox"/> Moves the baby's arms and legs, or gently strokes the baby. <input type="checkbox"/> Gets the baby's attention with a shaker toy or other object.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not play with baby: Discuss ways to help baby see, hear, feel, and move appropriate for baby's age.
How do you talk with your baby?	<input type="checkbox"/> Looks into baby's eyes and talks softly to baby.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not talk with baby: Ask caregiver to look into baby's eyes and talks to baby.
How do you get your baby to smile?	<input type="checkbox"/> Responds to baby's sounds and gestures to get baby smile.	<input type="checkbox"/> Tries to force smile or is not responsive to baby: Ask caregiver to make large gestures and cooling sounds; copy baby's sounds and gestures, and see baby response.
How do you play with your child?	<input type="checkbox"/> Plays word games or with toy objects, appropriate for age.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not play with child: Ask caregiver to play or communication activity, appropriate for age.
How do you talk with your child?	<input type="checkbox"/> Looks into child's eyes and talks softly to child, asks question.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not talk with child, or talks harshly to child: Ask caregiver to play an interactive activity with child, such as peek-a-boo, and see child respond and smile.
How do you get your child to smile?	<input type="checkbox"/> Draws smile out from child.	
How do you think your child is learning?	<input type="checkbox"/> Says the child is learning well.	<input type="checkbox"/> Says the child is slow to learn: Encourage more activity with the child, check hearing and seeing; Refer child with difficulties.

2. Ask to see child again in one week, if needed (circle day):

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Weekend

Or refer child to: