



# Early Childhood Development in India

A compendium of resources and tools



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for every child

27<sup>th</sup> April, 2020

This compendium of resources was first developed by UNICEF for internal use by programme officers in India country office and different field offices. Once developed it was felt that the same can be of use to other stakeholders working in the area of Early Childhood Development in India. This is document tries to complies the policies and programmes run by Government of India in contributing to agenda of early childhood development along with the resources available to implement the programme, guidance notes, operational guidelines, training modules, communication tools, etc. The resources mentioned in this compendium are open source and available for use.

By the time the document was finalized COVID-19 pandemic had hit India and the world, the document has a chapter on ECD during COVID-19 which focuses on responsive parenting.

In case additional information, resources are available besides what is already mentioned in the document please share the details with

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## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood years (conception to 6 years) are the most crucial period in a child's life which lays the foundation for further learning and development. There is growing economic and neurological evidence around investment in early childhood development having positive and long-lasting impact on children. The neurological research shows that these early years sees the maximum brain development, the latest Lancet Series says 90% of the brain development happens by the age of 6 years and economic research conclude high rates of returns for investment in early years, the recent analysis shows high returns on investment in early childhood development, 17 dollar for each dollar invested in early years.

To provide early childhood development opportunities for children to survive, thrive and transform there is an urgent need to increase multisectoral coverage of quality programming in early childhood development that incorporates health, nutrition, security and safety, responsive caregiving, and early learning<sup>1</sup>. There is evidence to conclude that to make comprehensive interventions successful, smart, and sustainable, they need to be implemented as multi-sectoral intervention packages anchored in nurturing care<sup>2</sup>. The goal of early childhood development as per the UNICEF global programme guide on ECD<sup>3</sup> is that all young children (0-6 years), especially the most vulnerable, achieve their developmental potential from conception to age of school entry. This is enabled by two factors:



1. Equitable access to essential quality health, nutrition, WASH, protection and early learning services that address their developmental needs;

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<sup>1</sup> Early childhood development coming of age: science through the life course

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)31389-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)31389-7/fulltext)

<sup>2</sup> Nurturing care: promoting early childhood development

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)31390-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)31390-3/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/FINAL\\_ECD\\_Programme\\_Guidance\\_September\\_2017.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/FINAL_ECD_Programme_Guidance_September_2017.pdf)

- Parents and caregivers are supported and engaged in nurturing care and positive parenting with their young children.

### GOAL OF ECD

All young children, from conception up to the age of school entry, achieve their developmental potential in equitable inclusive care environments, programme and policies, including in humanitarian setting

### OBJECTIVES OF ECD

#### Children up to the age of school entry receive essential services

Children up to the age of school entry, including children with disabilities and children in fragile contexts, have equitable access to quality child care, health, nutrition, protection and early learning services to address their developmental needs

#### Parents and caregivers practice nurturing care

Parents engaged in nurturing care and positive parenting and stimulating and learning activities

To reach their full potential, every child must have access to five inter-related and indivisible components of ECD as defined in the Nurturing Care Framework<sup>4</sup> – Good health, adequate nutrition for the mother and child, security and safety, responsive caregiving and early learning. These inter-components can be unpacked as

**Good Health:** Includes physical and emotional wellbeing of children and mothers which is a result of providing affectionate and appropriate response to their daily needs, protecting them from household and environmental dangers, having hygiene practices which minimize infections, using promotive and preventive health services and seeking appropriate treatment for any illnesses.

**Adequate Nutrition:** Includes meeting the nutrient needs of pregnant women, lactating mothers and young children through adequate nutrition. Mother’s nutrition during pregnancy affects not only her health and wellbeing but of the growing child as well. Skin to skin contact with early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for six months, continued breastfeeding after six months with adequate complementary feeding with due attention on dietary diversity and feeding frequency using locally available, culturally accepted foods.

**Security and Safety:** Young children and mothers are the most vulnerable group and any negative experience can cause fear and stress among them, which can lead to emotional, mental and social maladjustments. Children need to be safeguarded from any form of violence, abuse, neglect and environmental risks – including air pollution, water pollution and exposure to hazardous chemicals.

**Responsive caregiving:** This includes building trust and social relationships in young children by observing and responding to their movement, sounds and gestures. Providing responsive feeding, interactions, play



<sup>4</sup> <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272603/9789241514064-eng.pdf>

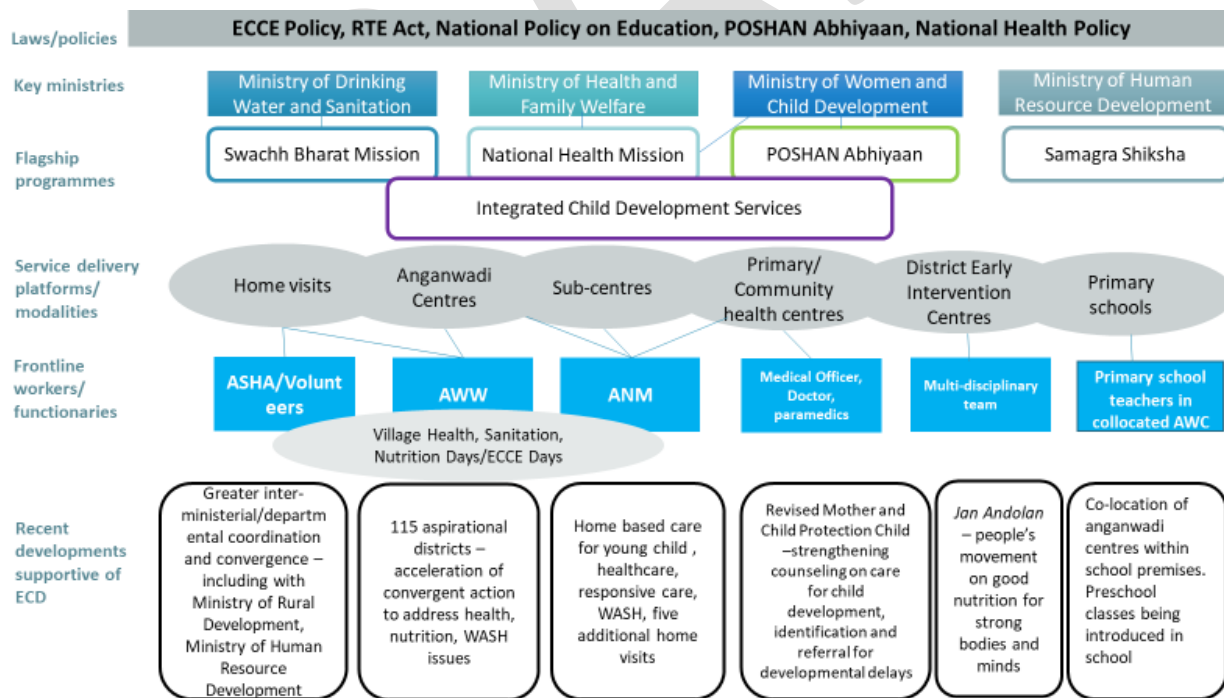
opportunities to children while protecting them from injury and negative effects of adversity. Caregivers engagement with children in early years are important for their brain and overall development.

**Early Learning:** Opportunities of early stimulation for young children through interactive engagement with caregivers and a conducive learning environment is essential for their learning and development. Children learn through play, smiling, making eye contact, talking and singing, modelling, imitation provide learning opportunity to the children. Play based early learning opportunities must be provided to the young children to enrich and diversify their experiences for their optimal development.

Recently, WHO has developed a guidelines for improving Early Childhood Development, to provide direction for strengthening ECD policies and programmes<sup>5</sup>.

**The present document provides different stakeholders with guide on strategic components of Early Childhood Development strategy, sector specific interventions by the government and the convergent tools, guides, materials available.**

Early Childhood Development is catered through different policies and flagship programmes of Government of India for health, nutrition, WASH, early learning, early screening/intervention and special needs and parental/family support implemented through various ministries using variety of delivery platforms to promoting holistic development of the child. The framework below represents the policy frameworks, flagship programmes, service delivery platforms through which frontline workers and functionaries reach to the children, parents and other caregivers.



<sup>5</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/improving-early-childhood-development-who-guideline>

## GOOD HEALTH

Government of India's National Health Mission (NHM) encompasses its two Sub-Missions, the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM). The main programmatic components include Health System Strengthening, Reproductive-Maternal- Neonatal-Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A), and Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases. The NHM envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable & quality health care services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs. There are a number of scheme and programmes under the mission focusing on the health of the child and mother same have been briefly discussed below.

**MAA (Mothers' Absolute Affection) Programme Promotion of Breastfeeding and IYCF** is a nationwide programme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with an aim to focus on promotion of breastfeeding and provision of counselling services for supporting breastfeeding through health systems.

*Resources: Guidelines, list of trainers, Presentations, ICT materials<sup>6</sup>*

**Home Based Care for the Young Child (HBYC)** programme is rolled out under the National Health Mission as an extension of the Home Based New Born Care (HBNC) programme to promote evidence-based interventions delivered in four key domains namely nutrition, health, childhood development and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene). Mother and Child Protection Card has been revised and is being used as a communication tool for rolling out the HBYC programme.

*Resources: Operational Guidelines<sup>7</sup> Mother and Child Protection Card<sup>8</sup>*

**National Rehabilitation Centres Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs)** are being set up in the health facilities for inpatient management of severely malnourished children, with counselling of mothers for proper feeding and once they are on the road to recovery, they are sent back home with regular follow up.

*Resources: Operational Guidelines<sup>9</sup>*

**Special Newborn Care Units (SNCU)** are being established at district and sub-district hospitals to provide care for sick newborns except major surgeries. It is a separate unit and in close proximity to the labour room, and are managed by adequately trained doctors, staff nurses, healthcare workers and support staff.

*Resources: Operational Guidelines<sup>10</sup>*

### **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)**

Under National Rural Health Mission, significant progress has been made in reducing mortality in children now there is a dire need to improving survival outcome. Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) is an important initiative aiming at early identification and early intervention for children from birth to 18 years to cover 4 'D's viz. Defects at birth, Deficiencies, Diseases, Development delays including disability. The programme focuses a lot on the first thousand days of the child As part of the programme a document on

<sup>6</sup> <https://nhm.gov.in/index1.php?lang=1&level=4&sublinkid=1258&lid=330>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.aspirationaldistricts.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Home-Based-Care-for-Young-Child-Guidelines.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [https://nhm.gov.in/New\\_Updates\\_2018/NHM\\_Components/Immunization/Guidelines\\_for\\_immunization/MCP\\_Card\\_English\\_version.pdf](https://nhm.gov.in/New_Updates_2018/NHM_Components/Immunization/Guidelines_for_immunization/MCP_Card_English_version.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <http://rajswasthya.nic.in/MTC%20Guideline-%20MOHFW.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> [https://nrhm.gujarat.gov.in/images/pdf/fbnc\\_op\\_guidelines\\_goi.pdf](https://nrhm.gujarat.gov.in/images/pdf/fbnc_op_guidelines_goi.pdf)

the importance of first 1000 days has been developed which can be used by parents and families to build on their knowledge on how to utilize the potential of the first thousand day.

*Resources: Resource Documents, Training Manuals, Videos, Operational Guidelines<sup>11</sup>, Journey of the first 1000 days<sup>12</sup>*

## ADEQUATE NUTRITION

Nutrition programme focuses on providing adequate nutrition to children and mother through government of India's flagship programmes of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and National Health Mission. ICDS contributes to the goal of provide adequate nutrition through supplementary nutrition programme for the pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 6 months to 6 years. The Anganwadi worker also provides nutrition education and counselling to the mothers/caregivers during growth monitoring and home visits. Different programmes to promote breastfeeding for young children like MAA and HBYC programme has been discussed under the health section above. In this session the focus will on a recent flagship programme of the Government, POSHAN Abhiyan.

**POSHAN Abhiyaan** The Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition or POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission, is Government of India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. With the overarching aim to build a people's movement (Jan Andolan) around malnutrition, POSHAN Abhiyaan intends to significantly reduce malnutrition in the next three years.

For implementation of POSHAN Abhiyaan the four-point strategy/pillars of the mission are:



*Resources: POSHAN Abhiyan Jan Andolan guidelines, powerpoints, videos and other content on different components of POSHAN – First Golden 1000 days, Anemia Prevention, Diarrhea management, Hygiene and Sanitation and nutrient-rich foods<sup>13</sup>*

## EARLY LEARNING - EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

Early learning is the foundation for learning and an integral part of early childhood development as depicted in the nurturing care framework. This section is going to focus on the different initiatives of the government in provide quality early childhood care and education to the three to six-year-old children. Below are the descriptions of some key documents in relation to education within ECD:

<sup>11</sup> <https://nhm.gov.in/index1.php?lang=1&level=4&sublinkid=1190&lid=583>

<sup>12</sup> [https://nhm.gov.in/images/pdf/programmes/RBSK/Resource\\_Documents/Journey\\_of\\_The\\_First\\_1000\\_Days.pdf](https://nhm.gov.in/images/pdf/programmes/RBSK/Resource_Documents/Journey_of_The_First_1000_Days.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qCy95ASz6hFfr25Tzu\\_ygGU8SkLzqGF5](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qCy95ASz6hFfr25Tzu_ygGU8SkLzqGF5)

**National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy**<sup>14</sup> was formulated in 2013 caters to all children under 6 years of age and commits to universal access to quality early childhood education. 'The policy conforms to the vision of holistic and integrated development of the child, with focus on care and early learning at each sub-stage of the developmental continuum, to support children's all round and holistic development'.

**National Early Childhood care and Education Curriculum Framework**<sup>15</sup> was developed and launched along with the policy. The purpose of the framework is to promote quality and excellence in early childhood education by providing guidelines for practices that would promote optimum learning and development of all young children. Each programme is expected to develop its own curriculum to meet the needs of its children, their families, the specific setting, the linguistic culture and the local community. States have developed contextual curriculum using the framework and the AWW have been trained on executing the curriculum in the AWCs.

**Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes**<sup>16</sup> was released by the Ministry of Women and Child Development along with the policy and the curriculum framework. The Quality Standards framework identifies the key principles, indicators and exemplary good practices required for assuring quality in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services. The framework allows programme's to assess quality and identify the possible lacunae that need to be addressed if quality ECCE is to be provided.

In 2017, major development was seen in the sector when MWCD also launched national prototypes and guidelines for different aspects budgeted as per the policy, like the preschool kit for the AWC and the activity books for children.

**National prototype of pre-school education kit**<sup>17</sup> Given the importance of play and play materials, ICDS has made a provision of Pre-School Education Kit in *Anganwadi* centres. In this context, this document has been prepared after reviewing the existing literature on ECE.

**National prototype of activity books for children**<sup>18</sup> These prototypes of activity books which can be used as a guide while developing state specific activity books for children 3- 4-year-old, 4-5 -year-old and 5-6-year-old children. This includes worksheets which support the



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<sup>14</sup> <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/National%20Early%20Childhood%20Care%20and%20Education-Resolution.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/national\\_ecce\\_curr\\_framework\\_final\\_03022014%20%282%29.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/national_ecce_curr_framework_final_03022014%20%282%29.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.nipccd-earchive.wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/PDF/Quality%20Standards%20for%20ECCE.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Pre-School%20Education%20Kit\\_1.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Pre-School%20Education%20Kit_1.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%203-4%20years%20Children\\_1.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%203-4%20years%20Children_1.pdf)

[https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%204-5%20years%20Children\\_1.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%204-5%20years%20Children_1.pdf)

[https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%205-6%20years%20Childrenl\\_1.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Activity%20Book%20for%205-6%20years%20Childrenl_1.pdf)

development of fine motor, creative, cognitive, emergent literacy and numeracy skills for young children. These activity books cover the progression of concepts and skills that are age and developmentally appropriate.

**National prototype for child assessment cards**<sup>19</sup> Monitoring the progress of every child enrolled at the *anganwadi* provides feedback to the *anganwadi* worker as well as parents on how their child is developing. This progress must be monitored for all domains of development. MWCD developed child assessment cards, to record the progress and identify children who need additional support. MWCD developed child assessment cards for the age groups of 3-4 years, 4 to 5 years and 5-6 years. The *anganwadi* worker must assess children's progress on a quarterly basis.

**Anganwadi workers ECE training module**<sup>20</sup> This training module is part of the job training module for Anganwadi Workers and focuses only on the early childhood care and education (ECCE) part of the training. This module is planned for a period of 5 days out of the 26 days allocated for the job training. The purpose of this module is to guide trainers to train *anganwadi* workers so that they can plan and conduct appropriate ECE activities for 3 to 6-year old. It is designed to provide the *anganwadi* worker a basic understanding of the ECCE curriculum and pedagogical approaches to ensure optimal and holistic development of young children so that they are ready to start formal schooling at the age of six years. It also includes a component on psychosocial development of children below the age of 3 years, to help Anganwadi Workers counsel parents/caregivers on early stimulation. It is expected that this training will be followed by periodic refresher or thematic trainings for further knowledge and skill enhancement.

#### **Additional Information**

**E-learning modules for ECE (MWCD)**<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Women and Child Development with technical support from UNICEF has developed 14 e-learning modules (21 sessions) on Early Childhood education (ECE) to strengthening the pre-school programme. At present the e-learning modules are available in Hindi and are available on the E-ILA portal of POSHAN Abhiyan. In addition, mobile nuggets (2-3 mins videos) have been developed based on the content delivered in these modules. These videos can be shared on social media. The e-learning modules can be used for periodic refresher or thematic trainings for further knowledge and skill enhancement.

**Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS)** UNICEF and CECED, Ambedkar University Delhi have empirically validated ELDS in India for three to six-year-old children. The Early Learning and Development Standards can be used as a reference and resource, to support the professional development of those responsible for the care and education of our youngest citizens. These standards are intended to deepen understanding of how children develop and help in understanding how to respond to their readiness for new interactions, experiences, activities, and challenges.

**ECE Quality Assessment Tool** The purpose of developing this tool is to support ICDS supervisors in understanding the quality of ECE processes in *anganwadi* centres using a scale and use the evidences for planning demonstration and mentoring activities. The tool was developed by UNICEF Maharashtra with support from CECED, Ambedkar University, to assess the quality of ECE in *anganwadi* setting. This tool has been validated in the field across nine states.

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<sup>19</sup> [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/CHILD%20ASSESSMENT%20CARD%203-6%20YEAR%20OLDS\\_0.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/CHILD%20ASSESSMENT%20CARD%203-6%20YEAR%20OLDS_0.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/EEC%20Training%20Module%20for%20Anganwadi%20Workers\\_1.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/EEC%20Training%20Module%20for%20Anganwadi%20Workers_1.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.e-ila.gov.in/>

## WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

In terms of the early childhood development the WASH programme can be looked at through three lenses, namely WASH in health facilities, WASH in Schools and Community Sanitation. Some key initiatives under WASH relevant for Early Childhood Development are mentioned below along with the links to the resource material.

**Swachh Bharat Mission** was launched in 2014, the *Swachh Bharat Mission* (SBM) or the Clean India Mission, is the world's largest sanitation and behaviour change programme. In rural areas, the Mission is known as the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) and aims to eliminate open defecation in rural India by 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

*Resources: guidelines for Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin*<sup>22</sup>

**Swachh Pakhwada** Annual fortnightly meeting activity where ministries converge on sanitation related activities, in support of the Swachh Bharat Mission and review the trends and progress on SBM.

*Resource: Documents on Swachh Pakhwada*<sup>23</sup>

**Swachh Swasth Sarvatra** The objective of the 'Swachh Swasth Sarvatra' initiative is to build on and leverage achievements of two complementary programmes – Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and Kayakalp – of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, respectively. Under this initiative, community health centres in ODF blocks of the country will be allocated INR One million under National Health Mission (NHM) to focus on sanitation and hygiene and Primary Health Centre (PHCs) in each district is awarded for meeting quality standards including sanitation and hygiene.

*Resources: The guidelines issued under the joint initiative of Swachh Swasth Sarvatra*<sup>24</sup>

**Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya** Guidelines comprises of key Essentials of WASH in Schools like – water, sanitation, handwashing with soap, operations and maintenance, behavior change activities, and capacity building. It also explains about the norms for – sanitation facility, daily handwashing with soap before mid-day meal, drinking water along with the teacher, student's role, and capacity building

*Resources: Guidelines for Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya*<sup>25</sup> and *Swachh Vidyalaya Puruskar Guidelines*<sup>26</sup>

**Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS)** The Swachh Bharat Mission is built upon scaling-up a behavior change approach called CAS. When SBM was first initiated, CAS modules were developed by UNICEF in support of the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation and were rolled out in Trainers of Trainers workshops for subsequent scale-up.

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<sup>22</sup> [https://jalshakti-ddws.gov.in/sites/default/files/SBM\(G\)\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://jalshakti-ddws.gov.in/sites/default/files/SBM(G)_Guidelines.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1dWgF\\_ihjkv6IMobiOgmo7ANFYNNrfI7k](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1dWgF_ihjkv6IMobiOgmo7ANFYNNrfI7k)

<sup>24</sup> <http://tripuranrhm.gov.in/QA/Guideline/SwachaSwasthaSarbartraGuideline.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10KebnEEm93-Q4MoLWfZw6-XO86SH8Ncg/view?usp=sharing>

<sup>26</sup> [http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/upload\\_document/Swachh\\_Vidyalay\\_Puraskar\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/Swachh_Vidyalay_Puraskar_Guidelines.pdf)

*Resources: Orientation Module for Senior Managers<sup>27</sup>, Module for mid-level Managers<sup>28</sup>, Module for Master Trainers<sup>29</sup> and guidebook for facilitators<sup>30</sup> and for community facilitators<sup>31</sup>*

**Kayakalp Scheme** The objectives of the “Kayakalp” Scheme are a) to promote cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices in public healthcare facilities, through incentivizing and recognizing public healthcare facilities that show exemplary performance in adhering to standard protocols of cleanliness and infection control; b) to inculcate a culture of ongoing assessment and peer review of performance related to hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation; c) to create and share sustainable practices.

*Resources: Guidelines for implementation of “kayakalp” initiative<sup>32</sup> and the national guidelines for clean hospital<sup>33</sup> has been developed.*

Other important resources

- Manual for Front line workers (AWW, ASHA/USHA) by US AID, Health of the Urban Poor (HUP) Program and Population Foundation of India<sup>34</sup> - This manual focuses on the key components of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), which are the important determinants of health and well-being.
- A documentation of the approaches taken up in the state of Rajasthan for the WASH in Schools, with key lessons<sup>35</sup>

## CHILD PROTECTION

Child Protection is an important component of ECD. Reducing adversities by preventing abuse, neglect and violence; providing non-institutional family care and early intervention for vulnerable children and birth registration address the security and safety dimension of ECD. With respect to child protection, given below are some key explanations and interventions that feature within ECD:

<sup>27</sup> [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cmO\\_Svuy2t-63uWUR3LqGwZuYI7o9At5](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cmO_Svuy2t-63uWUR3LqGwZuYI7o9At5)

<sup>28</sup> <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xGQMXZ48AyISE2Ymvy1NJFRxu6tRWsU4>

<sup>29</sup> <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yys2wzHk5yCSFOoS8XqdiawASJvbZCUO>

<sup>30</sup> <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yXlCxde8agrd764CRJs86ce6ZTF8osx9>

<sup>31</sup> [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1EsVzo\\_tQZ5rTlxvBmdG1EPI4pvE01mRb](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1EsVzo_tQZ5rTlxvBmdG1EPI4pvE01mRb)

<sup>32</sup> <http://qi.nhsrindia.org/sites/default/files/Implementation%20Guidebook%20for%20Kayakalp%20final%20version.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> [https://mohfw.gov.in/sites/default/files/7660257301436254417\\_0.pdf](https://mohfw.gov.in/sites/default/files/7660257301436254417_0.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KaNGs-6ZeDhvwvNsB3Ea-LfH2BSggW8b/view>

<sup>35</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FcsZ1GeT9xcPV4rRB42nNlxMklplgBm2/view?usp=sharing>

**Prevention Violence against Children at Early Childhood stage through Parenting:** There is strong scientific evidence that exposure to any form of violence during early childhood – emotional, sexual, and physical – has a significant negative impact on children’s brain development and compromises children’s development, health and education outcomes<sup>36</sup>. It is generally assumed that young children would not face violence or violent disciplinary methods. However, evidence shows otherwise. A recent formative study sponsored by UNICEF (2019) endorses the fact that often parents and caregivers use violence to discipline children and the study recorded 33 different forms of violent behaviours to which children are exposed. Children are equally affected by witnessing violence in the family – violence on other siblings or domestic violence. Interventions for improving parenting practices and providing family support including positive parenting strategies to work with families/caregivers – by WHO and South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children (SACG), & South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) have shown positive results for preventing VAC in early childhood. WHO’s model for Parenting for Lifelong Health has programmes for each age group, including for early childhood. The programme is grounded in collaborative social learning behavioural change techniques. It actively engages parents in building positive parenting skills to improve parent-child relationships and reduce harsh discipline. It uses collaborative, non-didactic methods such as group discussions, illustrated stories of parent-child interaction, role-plays to practice parenting skills, home activities assignments, and collective problem-solving. It reiterates the importance of building a strong, positive relationship with children for both father and mother and having a healthy parent-child and other caregiver interaction every day. This means enabling both parents (and other care givers including older siblings, grandparents) spending quality time with young children playing age-appropriate games, learning language and praising the child. At the same time, it is important to build a support structure for parents at community level, especially for those from economically and socially marginalized communities.



*Resources: WHO’s Parenting for life long health programme details for infants, toddlers, young children, videos, manuals, training material and researches<sup>37</sup>*

## COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2950228/pdf/nihms206505.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/child/plh/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/plh/en/)

Communication and advocacy are important implementing strategies through which key messages in relation to ECD can put into public domain for further engagement with the caregivers and the larger community. Examples of the some of the simple communication material available to engage with parents and caregivers is given.

*Resources: 7 things you need to know about parenting<sup>38</sup>, Building Brain Through Play<sup>39</sup>, Baby Talk<sup>40</sup>, Breastfeeding<sup>41</sup>, Music for a baby's brain development<sup>42</sup>, Possible challenges relating to Parenting<sup>43</sup>*

## ECD and COVID-19

The coronavirus disease, global pandemic has brought with it, new challenges for parents and children. Young children and their families are worse affected by the coronavirus disease. Daily lives of young children have changed with pre-school and school closures, their movement restricted. In the current situation parents have become of the frontline responders to the children in this crisis but the parents themselves are under great stress and insecure due to future uncertainties. Hence, it is important to engage with parents of young children with accurate information not just regarding prevention of diseases and ideas and resources to help them use this time as an opportunity to spend significant quality time with their children and family. It is important for parents to engage with and guide their children to ensure psycho-social wellbeing and continued learning. UNICEF, WHO and other development partners have created resource material for parents to engage with their children positively.



<sup>38</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NblCrG5s4IU>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lseleZE83UM>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=be20xtqLGFU>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IBSrjMpZVo>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CQ39enyyFc>

<sup>43</sup> <https://innovate.mygov.in/unicef/>

Resources: UNICEF - Parenting-Guide for Parents<sup>44</sup>, ECDAN - ECD and COVID-19 resources for parents, educators, administrators, child protection workers, health practitioners, and policymakers<sup>45</sup>, Parenting in times of COVID-19<sup>46</sup>, Webinar on ECD and COVID-19<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/coronavirus-covid-19-guide-parents>

<sup>45</sup> <https://mailchi.mp/ecdan/covid19>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/healthy-parenting>

<sup>47</sup> [https://zoom.us/rec/play/7pYtdbuvqzk3HteWsASDBf5xW9XsLa-s0ihl86EKyUizVnkGYFekb7BBa7EKzhnmLJZhM83kPWFocxmv?startTime=1585225983000&xzm\\_rtaid=Q9DLiBQdQ4ydKt63NOVg9Q.1585663203909.7c175f44144450c9e770ce1f98d39425&xzm\\_rhtaid=154](https://zoom.us/rec/play/7pYtdbuvqzk3HteWsASDBf5xW9XsLa-s0ihl86EKyUizVnkGYFekb7BBa7EKzhnmLJZhM83kPWFocxmv?startTime=1585225983000&xzm_rtaid=Q9DLiBQdQ4ydKt63NOVg9Q.1585663203909.7c175f44144450c9e770ce1f98d39425&xzm_rhtaid=154)