Participant handbook on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Parenting Education

Every Child Deserves the Best Start in Life
Participant Handbook on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Parenting Education

Every Child deserves the best start in life
UNICEF has supported the Government to develop and integrated parenting package based on life cycle approach with a focus on promoting key family care practices. The package consists of training manual, counselling cards, fliers and other communication material. The package is intended to support parents, caregivers, family and community to provide integrated care to young children. The training manual will be used to train teachers, social welfare workers, and all those paraprofessionals working with mothers and children on the needs of children and how to respond to them. The frontline workers will use the counselling cards to educate parents and care-givers. This handbook, which is a part of the package will support the frontline workers to have additional detail information and can be used as a reference on early childhood development and parenting education.

The introduction provides an overview of evidence-based concepts that informs the parenting education. The purpose of this section is to define the elements of positive parenting and key family care practices for health and optimal child development.
Intended Audience for the Participant Handbook

This handbook is designed for the LHW/Other front-line workers. There are two basic tenets of this handbook. One: the LHWs/other frontline worker gains sufficient knowledge of early childhood development, parenting and KFCPs and two: s/he attains skills for the basics of interpersonal communication. The earlier empowers the LHWs/other frontline worker with information and the latter makes him/her skillful in engaging with mother and family to discuss problems and look for solutions.

Practical tips are provided for the frontline workers to conduct sessions.

How to use the Participant Handbook

This handbook is for frontline workers to have additional information on ECD and parenting and they can use it as a reference guide when they need additional information. It will provide necessary information and practical guidelines on nurturing care and key family care practices for maximizing the physical, cognitive, socioemotional and cultural development.

The frontline workers such as LHW, family welfare worker, health and nutrition worker or ECD/ECCE facilitator, social mobilizer, teachers will be trained by the trainers on ECD/parenting education. The training will equip them on how to conduct the practical session for parenting education. Frontline workers use the counseling cards, The counseling cards educate parents and care givers at household level include step by step instructions on how to conduct the sessions with parents/care-givers.

ICONS used in the manual and their meaning

1. Background information
2. Key messages
Overall objective of the handbook:

The objective of the handbook is to provide guidance to the LHWs/other frontline workers to conduct parenting education to family and care-givers and bring a positive change in people’s behaviors towards maternal and child health and development including nurturing care and responsive care giving. It will help to improve the capacity of LHW/other frontline workers to increase their understanding of ECD and to improve effective communication and counseling.

Training approach:

The parenting education in the counselling cards is to use an interactive dialogue with parents and care-givers when providing key information in order to motivate them to adopt positive practices. It contains a new counseling approach, and appropriately timed messages on 22 key family practices that LHW/other frontline workers will deliver in the family/community with the help of counseling cards.

Following are the key steps that the frontline worker needs to ensure:

1. Know the concepts
2. Use of materials

Know the concepts

Early brain development has its foundation on two components:

A. The frontline workers will need to have good grasp of key concepts of ECD and responsive care giving, which will be the core foundation, based on which the family care practices have been designed.

B. Key Family Care Practices: This set of 22 KFCPs is the basic knowledge for LHW/other frontline workers. The LHW/other frontline workers need to have a grasp of the importance of these practices and the ways these practices can be promoted among family and community.

C. Knowledge only, however useful, is not enough for initiating and sustaining new behaviors. Frontline workers need to effectively communicate about these behaviors to their community. Knowing the context in which a certain behavior may not be happening and providing solutions for barriers if any, is an important step. Moreover, helping mother and family in taking the first step towards a seemingly difficult new behavior, is also required. The simple technique of Ask, Brainstorm, Coach (ABC) of communication is a powerful way of talking to families and communities. The FLWs should read, understand and practice these 3 steps before educating families/care givers and communities so that they can be confident in using the skills for parenting education effectively.

Use of materials

A good frontline worker makes the maximum use of visual materials. In this case the frontline worker can use the counselling cards itself as a visual material and then the other things like leaflet and milestone of child growth to generate a discussion.
Tips for the Frontline Workers

After each session, the facilitator should write down some notes about lessons learnt or other interesting discoveries made during the session which will help in the next training session.

Before the session, the frontline worker must:

1. Read the participant’s handbook beforehand.
2. Understand the structure and flow of each session.
3. Have both counseling cards when visiting the communities and households.
4. Ensure availability of the materials and supplies that will be used during parenting education sessions e.g., flip charts, fliers, panaflex etc.
5. Organize the seating arrangement.
6. Allow every participant an equal chance to share his/her views and listen to them carefully.
7. Create a friendly environment and use three steps of ABC counseling during each session.
8. Provide positive feedback and try to avoid negative criticism.
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MODULE 1

BASIC CONCEPTS
Session 1

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Background:

During the past decade, Pakistan has made significant progress in the area of mother and child health. Yet, the number of mothers and children dying is unacceptably high. It is estimated that one woman dies every hour, due to pregnancy and birth-related causes. The number of children dying is even higher. One child dies every minute in Pakistan. Many of those who survive face a plethora of problems. Diarrhea, pneumonia and malnutrition are common, and enough to pull back on likely achievements of those who manage to survive.

Owing to multiple factors including low birth weight, lack of proper feeding, and repeated illnesses, the boys and girls stop growing. From the outside, we see this in the form of child being less than normal in weight and short in height. Inside, the effects are not visible. It affects the child’s brain development. The child faces difficulty in learning, gets low scores in school and ends up in low-income professions. In the adult life, this individual will earn less and provide insufficient food and opportunities to the family, transferring same problems to the next generation.

The hospitals, doctors and other medical staff have important roles to play. But equally important are the families, where the boys and girls, and their mothers, spend most of their time. Parents and other members of the family can take small steps to ensure that children are well cared for at homes and develop to their full potential both physically emotionally.

If families are educated on key family care practices, coached and motivated to practice them, it can help in ensuring optimum growth and development of children. The role of parents/caregivers, family and community is critical.

In order to understand the care of young children, families/caregivers and communities should understand the concept of early childhood and the critical and sensitive period of child development; early childhood development, the integrated nature of child development and the different components of nurturing care for holistic development of children, key family care practices and why parents should give children nurturing and optimal care at this critical period of human development.
KEY MESSAGES

- Child development is the period from conception (pregnancy) to primary school entry age (0-8 years)

- Early Childhood development (ECD) consists of integrated services such as good health, balanced nutrition, safety and security of child, clean and good parent-child interaction with lots of play and communication.

- Ensure your child has these services to be healthy, perform well in school, like school with reduced repetition of class, complete school to job, and become a good citizen, and will be able to take care of his/her own family.

- From conception to three years of life are very important in the provision of nurturing care because more than 80% of brain develops during this time and is a critical period.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Early childhood development includes physical, socio emotional, cognitive and motor development between 0-8 years of age. For a child’s optimal growth and development, 0-8 years of a child’s life are the most important years and within this time period, 0-2 years is the most crucial time.

- The early years are critical because child’s brain develops rapidly and has a high capacity for change. This time lays foundation for the future. If a child is provided a favorable and nurturing environment, his/her chances to a better future increase.

- It is estimated that one woman dies every hour in Pakistan, due to pregnancy and birth-related causes. The number of children dying is even higher. One child dies every minute in our country. Those who survive usually face a plethora of problems. Diarrhea, pneumonia and malnutrition are common

- If a child is provided with nurturing environment, his/her chances to survival and growth improve. It is the role of parents to provide their children with a nurturing environment that is sensitive to children’s health and nutritional needs, provide protection from threats, offer opportunities for early learning, and allow interactions that are responsive, emotionally supportive and developmentally stimulating.

- The environment of a household plays a crucial role in a child’s health and development. Safe and secure structures of the house, adequate amount and type of food, and availability of books and play materials - all have a key role in a child’s life. Equally if not more important are the social and psychological factors. The love and affection of elders and the early learning through play with siblings are critical. Together, this nurturing care helps a child grow, learn and develop into a positive personality.
Session 2:
INTRODUCTION TO NURTURING CARE AND POSITIVE PARENTING

Background:
Nurturing and care and responsive care giving helps children to develop to their full potential. Parents play a critical role in facilitating early experiences through the provision of nurturing care, defined as care which ensures health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, safety and security, social, emotional well-being, and early learning. The love and affection of elders and the early learning through play with siblings are critical. Together, this nurturing care helps a child grow, learn and develop into a positive personality. Parents should engage and interact with children and help children grow to their full potential.

Care for Child Development:
The Care for Child Development (CCD) intervention is designed to promote cognitive, motor, social and affective development for infants and young children through early stimulation and supports interactions between caregiver and child that build the caregiver’s capacity to be sensitive and responsive. CCD is about play and communication with the child (Newborn, infant, child up to 2 years) in different contexts where the parent/caregiver and child are together. It can be during a structured play session, routine activities at home, when changing the child, feeding, teaching task etc. It involves skin-to-skin contact, hugging, face-to face with smiling laughing, facial mimics, message use of object in play, communication, showing love and praise to motivate the child. The CCD intervention should be integrated into existing programmes, including health, nutrition, education and child protection services.

Often times parents need help and guidance on how to provide nurturing care to their children. Different methods (e.g., using mass media) can be adopted for this guidance but reaching and helping them through community-based frontline workers is mostly recommended. In rural Pakistan, the Lady Health Worker (LHW) of the National Programme for Family Planning and Primary Health Care, popularly called Lady Health Worker Program (LHWP) has the mandate of providing this parenting education. Every month, the LHW and some other frontline workers such as school health and nutrition workers, social mobilisers, social welfare workers, CSO workers etc visit each household of his/her catchment area to provide health promotion and refer to the health center for curative services.
**KEY MESSAGES**

- Child development is the period from conception (pregnancy) to primary school entry age (0-8 years).
- Parenting can be understood as interactions, behaviours, emotions, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practices associated with the provision of nurturing care.
- The term ‘parenting’ or ‘parent’ is not limited to biological parents, but extends to any guardian or caregiver providing consistent care to the child. Those caregivers include fathers, mothers, siblings, grandparents and other relatives, as well as child care providers who play a significant role in caring for infants and young children.
- In some ways, parents determine the life course of a child, as parenting is twice as predictive of a child’s success in early learning as a family’s socioeconomic status.
- When parents interact with children it is not for their children to achieve one outcome, but to develop. Programmes should adapt to this reality of developmental complexity to support nurturing care holistically.

**NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:**

1. If a child is provided with nurturing environment, his/her chances to survival and growth improve. It is the role of parents to provide their children with a nurturing environment that is sensitive to children’s health and nutritional needs, provide protection from threats, offer opportunities for early learning, and allow interactions that are responsive, emotionally supportive and developmentally stimulating.

2. The environment of a household plays a crucial role in a child’s health and development. Safe and secure structures of the house, adequate amount and type of food, and availability of books and play materials - all have a key role in a child’s life. Equally if not more important are the social and psychological factors.

3. The love and affection of elders and the early learning through play with siblings are critical. Together, this nurturing care helps a child grow, learn and develop into a positive personality.

4. The Key Family Care Practices are commonly practiced behaviors at household level that impact on mother and child survival, and child’s growth and development. Improving family and community practices is one of the three components of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI strategy) promoted by WHO and UNICEF since 1992. The three components are as follows:
   a. Improvement in the case management skills of health workers through the provision of locally adapted guidelines on IMCI and through activities to promote their use.
   b. Improvement in the health system required for the effective management of childhood illness.
   c. Improvement in family and community practices.
SESSION 3
THE FAMILY AND HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

Background:

The family is the primary social environment and source of experiences for the child, both because family members or primary caregivers are most in contact with the child. The most salient feature of the family in child rearing is not just the socialization of the child to cultural norms and values, it is also the social and economic resources of the family including parenting skills and education, cultural practices and approaches to intra-familial relations and health status of the family members. Children learn moral values and social roles through a process of socialization which occurs in different domains marked by different aspects of the parent-child relationship. Children learn from the family through riddles, songs, proverbs, myths which reinforce customs and family and community acts like model for expected behaviors. There are several members of the family like mother, father, siblings, grandparents and other relatives who play an important role in child development especially in his sense of security, belongingness, social harmony and group coherence which is a stable and fertile environment for the child to grow. The family supports children as they need to have bonding with at least a family member for a feeling of security.

For a family to function in a healthy manner, there is a need to be effective communication between parents and children. The family need to listen to each other, be open and respect each other, encourage members to express their feelings. Thus qualities of a healthy family relationship are love, trust, honesty, appreciations, patience, caring, mutual respect, endurance, tolerance, protection and safety and help other feel valued and build self-esteem.

Parenting:

Parenting is the process of supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. The responsibility for proper child care and development continues to rest with the parents, however there are social protection and other social support systems to assist them in making informed decisions about quality care for their children. The purpose of this session is to examine the different family patterns and relationships within the family and impact child development.
1. A family can provide a safe place for its members to share feelings, thoughts, ideas, fears and hopes.

2. Parents should try to find time to talk with each person alone, and together as a family.

3. When you are angry and most worried, it is especially important to plan a few minutes when everyone can be together.

4. A few minutes spent at the end of the day just talking about how things have gone that day and planning for tomorrow can be a relief from stress. Be sure to save difficult problem-solving conversations for times when you are not tired.

5. In Pakistan a lot of children live in extended families especially in rural areas. Grandparents, aunts and uncles as well as older siblings take care of young children.

6. Therefore, it is very important to discuss the role of families in childhood development and care and responsive care giving.

7. The bond children develop with their parents/care givers and families help them to feel secure and protected.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

• It is important to identify a family member as a support person for the time of delivery. This support person can be any family member and will help woman in breastfeeding her newborn and other important tasks.

• Maternal wellbeing is very important. A mother can only provide her full attention to her child when she will be mentally relaxed. If a woman has a loving husband and family, she will be happy and satisfied and this will affect her child positively.

• In our culture, joint family system is very common. Children get to spend quality time with their grandparents and other family members. It is very important that family members should be cognizant of child’s needs and provide him/her a safe and healthy environment.
SESSION 4:
BUILDING BRAIN IN PAKISTAN AS FOUNDATION FOR LIFELONG DEVELOPMENT

Background:

The brain is responsible for human functioning (movement, thinking, feeling and emotions, perception and how we relate to others). Humans cannot function without a good brain. Brain development starts from the moment of conception and grows very rapidly during the first 1000 days of life. In the first 3 years of life the child brain has grown to 80%. The brain is made up of connections that need to be nourished to increase the connections because the more the connections the better the brain. Building Brains means that we are building the intelligence, motor development, social and emotional development which are the main domains of human development.

During the brain development process, the pregnant mother and child need to be healthy, have proper nutrition, be secure and protected, and exposed to learning experiences and STIMULATION because these are like food for the brain. There is compelling evidence now that parents and caregivers can change the brain connections through the sensory experiences (play and communication) with preventing diseases and eating proper food that affects the “wiring or connections” of the developing brain.

Positive parenting helps the child’s brain to grow in a healthy way. The good thing is that this can happen very easily during the period from conception to 3 years of age.

This session will help participants to be aware of how child’s brain functions and develops and how the early years are the foundation of lifelong development. The structure of brain is determined by the child’s early experiences and good parent/caregiver-child interactions.
KEY MESSAGES

- Sensitive and critical periods of development impact lifelong development and achievements.

- Children need proper nutrition, good health, positive parenting through stimulation for sensory experiences and protection from abuse, neglect and toxins for the brain to develop.

- Young children need lots of quality interactions to build connections in their brains for learning and healthy development. Healthy environment that stimulate all the senses through singing, story-telling, reading, playing, smelling, tasting, listening, touching, interacting with adults and other children build a healthy brain.

- Musical activities stimulate every part of the brain in all domains: physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language. Listening or singing songs makes the brain healthy and boost the mood of the child.

- The new born brain develops at an astonishing rate and is directly influenced by the quality of relationships and how he is cared in terms of body contact warm and loving care and stimulation of the senses- make child hear sounds, songs, music, see colours etc.

- Talk to the child by repeating and adding other words, and ready to your child every day, tell stories to the child to help simulated the brain. Hum or sing to the child even before he or she is born or listening to soft and melodic songs every day when pregnant. Talk to the child during breastfeeding, feeding while having eye contact.

- Take time to have some contact and affective moments with the child while looking into his/ her eyes- laughing and making the child to smile/laugh.

- Every day a parent should have some interaction at least 30 minutes per day with the child- doing something together that will make the child feel happy.
COUNSELLING SKILLS
Session 1:
FAMILIES BUILDING BRAINS IN PAKISTAN

Background:
This approach taken in the parenting education is an interactive method of educating and counselling care givers. The LHW/other frontline worker will continue talking about mother and child health issues like before. The difference would be in telling the families that in addition to taking care of their health and nutrition, if parents also provide the opportunities of learning through play, the boys and girls will become healthier and intelligent, and will be economically more productive as an adult.

Often it is thought that providing information about a practice will automatically result in adoption of that practice. Experience tells that it may not always happen. For example, LHW/other frontline worker’s message to a mother about 4 antenatal checkups may not always result in the mother going to health center and getting her checkups. From the mother’s perspective, there may be one or several valid reasons including having no money to commute, not knowing the procedure, or simply the lack of permission from the family. We know there is a solution for each of these problems but the LHW/other frontline worker will know and facilitate decision making only if she asks about existing situation in the family. The process of knowing the context and providing workable solutions within that context is called counseling.

The role of a LHW/other frontline worker is to facilitate adoption of healthy practices by the family and community. Counseling is the ‘way’ of doing this. Counseling is helping mother and family in thinking about a specific health practice, reasons why they are not able to fully adopt it, and jointly deciding and implementing the ways for full adoption. This method has been shown very helpful in difficult to change behaviors. While talking about a health and other issues, the LHW/other frontline worker tries to understand the barriers and assist the mother and family in making a decision to overcome that barrier and ultimately adopt the desired behavior. There are three simple steps that LHW/other frontline worker can follow to make her counseling effective. We call them the ABC of communication.

we have introduced a new method of counseling which is ABC of counseling.

The A of counseling includes:

- Start the visit every time by asking the mother about her situation. Develop a friendly relationship.
- Listen to the mother and the family and give importance to their views.
- To understand the viewpoint of mother, be mindful of her circumstances and empathize with her.
- Make eye contact during the conversation so that she feels you are actually interested in her problem.
- Give woman and her family adequate time to speak.
- Do not be instantly judgmental about anything while listening to their views and don’t be critical.
- Try to get to the root of the problem.
The B of counseling includes:

- Jointly look for a solution to the problem that was identified in the first (Ask) step.
- Help the woman/family in executing that solution.
- Divide the task into simple, smaller, and doable steps.
- Keep repeating all those steps at different times until and unless the task is completely achieved.
- Do not forget to praise the woman even for the smallest of changes that front-line worker observes.
- When you have figured out a solution, making the woman/family act accordingly is the most important part.

The C of counseling includes:

- Help the mother start implementing the solution that was jointly reached in the 2nd (Brainstorm) step.
- Show patience and ability to demonstrate the new skill to the mother.
- Repeat in appropriate words to confirm from mother or family that you have reached the right conclusion.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

Following is a brief detail of each of these steps,

- ABC of counseling is helps mother and family in thinking about a specific practice, reasons why they may not be able to fully adopt it, and jointly deciding and implementing the ways for full adoption.

Ask

- Start the visit every time by asking the mother about her situation. Listen to what mother and the family say and give importance to their views in order to earn their confidence. To understand the viewpoint of mother, be mindful of her circumstances and empathize with her. Make eye contact during the conversation so that she feels you are actually interested in her problem. Do not be judgmental about anything while listening to their views and don’t be critical. Try to get to the root of the problem (e.g., is it lack of money, or lack of family support, or simply a lack of knowledge) and repeat in appropriate words to confirm from mother or family that you have understood.

Brainstorm

- After listening to the caregiver, LHW/other frontline worker’s communication, should discuss and brainstorm what could be the solution to some of the barriers to practicing certain behavior. In brainstorming, the LHW/other frontline worker guides the woman towards that answer. While doing this she remembers that the proposed solutions are acceptable and doable in the context of that woman and her family.

Working towards a desired behavior also demands that you divide the task into simple, smaller, and doable steps. Keep repeating all those steps at different times until and unless the task is completely achieved. Do not forget to praise the woman even for the smallest of changes that she observes. When you have figured out a solution, making the woman/family act accordingly is the most important part.

Coach
Coaching is the most important step and best understood in the context of a developing child. When a child learns a new skill, e.g., eating with cup and spoon, the parents coach this skill. Initially the child cannot hold the spoon, spills food all over, becomes agitated and cries, throws the bowl away and so on. The parents always maintain the patience and keep encouraging and trying. Sometimes they do the act by themselves to demonstrate how that job is done. Ultimately, the child learns that skill and starts eating happily, a time for rejoice and moving to another skill. The Coaching step in LHW/other frontline worker’s communication also follows the same principles.

In this, the LHW/other frontline worker helps the mother start implementing the solution that was jointly reached in the 2nd (Brainstorm) step. During the process the LHW/other frontline worker needs to show patience and ability to demonstrate the new skill to the mother. For example, a LHW/other frontline worker can coach a woman how to communicate with her husband on family planning, she can facilitate her in cooking homemade foods for her baby, or she can provide coaching on how to make low-cost toys from materials available at home. Sometimes the tasks are complex and need to be broken into small steps, health worker helping the mother start adoption of the practice.

Following are the main features of this new way of helping the parents and caregivers:

1. Provide information: Building Brains Pakistan has developed pictorial materials for LHWs/other frontline workers to use for discussion with mothers and other members of the household. These materials contain information about key family care practices in simple language and pictures to illustrate these practices. The information links each practice with the child’s health and development. In addition to providing information, the LHW/other frontline worker also asks the family’s prevailing practice about it.

2. Encourage joint problem solving: Experience from all over the world informs that providing only the information is not enough for initiating and sustaining healthy practices. Several times the mothers and the families do not adopt desired practices because of certain contextual factors. A health worker cannot facilitate the adoption of desired practice unless she knows about and addresses these barriers in the specific context of that family. LHW/other frontline workers should use the approach of brainstorming for joint solutions to behavioural barriers faced by the care givers.

3. Emphasize coaching at all stages: Discussion, no matter how enriching, is useless if the learning is not put to practice. Building Brains Pakistan ensures this by introducing the element of coaching into the daily work of LHW/other frontline worker as well as the family. We all know that a child who is learning to hold a toy or a spoon for her own feeding fails many times. Parents and other caregivers have to show patience and keep trying till the baby learns that new skill. In the same way, health worker needs to show patience and ability to demonstrate the new skill to the mother.

The role of LHW/other frontline worker is to facilitate adoption of healthy practices by the family and community. Counseling is the ‘way’ of doing this. Counseling is helping mother and family in thinking about a specific health practice, reasons why they are not able to fully adopt it, and jointly deciding and implementing the ways for full adoption. This method has been shown very helpful in difficult to change health behaviors.
Some practical tips for the frontline workers

1. Decide the time of the visit according to the convenience and agreement of mother/care giver. This would allow the mother to sit in peace with you, listen to you carefully, and be able to inform you better about her problems.

2. Always start the visit with greetings and asking about general wellbeing of the family. This gives a message that you are not here just to fulfill your duty or to give a lecture in a hurry, rather you are actually interested in listening to the family’s problems and solving them.

3. If other members of the family are present, greet them as well and if they are interested, make them a part of the conversation. Assure the family that you are actually concerned about the family and mother and child’s health.

4. While sitting, make sure that you, mother and rest of the family are sitting at the same level. Frontline workers should not sit on a chair while others are sitting on the floor. If this happens, mother and family members might think themselves as less educated and will not be able to talk to you openly.

5. Start every visit by reminding what was discussed and what were the decisions made in the previous visit. If the mother has been able to act accordingly, praise her. Try to understand the reasons if she has remained unable to do those tasks and try to agree with her again to act upon them.

6. Appreciate and praise the mother for taking care of herself and her baby. If you will do this, the mother will listen to any new behavior that you talk about, and try her best to adopt it.

7. Listen carefully what mother has to say and then repeat it in your own words. This makes the mother feel that you are actually concerned about her problem and are listening to her attentively. This makes her feel contented that the issue she is facing is resolvable. If you are not able to understand her problem, repeating her words will clarify it for you as well.

8. Always make eye contact while talking to mother or listening to her. This will make her feel that you are fully attentive and she will feel that you are actually concerned and sincere towards her. Nodding your head while talking and saying simple motivating words like, “okay”, “good” will make the mother continue her conversation easily.

9. When talking to mothers and care givers, always use simple language and easily understandable words. Usually health workers use scientific jargon while talking about simple ailments, which general public cannot understand.

10. Say thank you at the end of every visit. Say thanks to the mother and family for giving you time and listening to what you had to say and ask their permission to leave. Also, decide the time and date for your next visit with the family.
KEY FAMILY CARE PRACTICES
SESSION 1:

Key Family Care Practices:

Global health leaders like the WHO and UNICEF have developed a set of household practices that are key for a healthy mother and child. Adoption of these practices significantly contributes to mother and child survival and health, paving the way for a healthy, happy and prosperous family and society. Countries have adopted as well as adapted these practices according to their context. The present list of KFCPs for Pakistan incorporates the preexisting resources; both international and national and is finalized after consultation with multisectoral experts from all provinces and regions. This list of 22 KFCPs for Pakistan adopts a life course approach and addresses health and development needs of the mother-infant dyad through various stages of life. Promotion of these practices is also a means of ensuring inter-sectoral collaboration as these address diverse areas including health, WASH, child protection, nutrition, child development, and education. The material with a list of key family care practices should be left at the household which the parents can refer to.

Counseling Cards:

Counseling cards for LHW/other frontline worker are based on Key Family Care Practices (KFCPs). One card addresses one KFCP and targets specific stage during the life course. Broadly the stages addressed are 1) Pregnancy and childbirth 2) Newborn period 3) Infancy 4) Toddler age 5) Preschool age 6) Primary school age. Each card has pictures for LHW/other frontline worker to use for generating discussion using the ABC (Ask, Brainstorm, Coach) of communication approach.

The key family care practices are commonly practiced behaviors at household level that, if practiced properly, impact a child’s survival, growth and development. These practices have been selected because they are by far the most likely to cause an impact on nutrition, survival, growth, wellness and development. The below list has been developed by adapting and collating similar lists proposed in Pakistan and in other countries.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- These KFCPs are the caregiver actions at the household level to ensure an optimal level of the well-being of children and women of reproductive age.
- Some of the KFCPs have ongoing presence and importance. These include; Spousal communication, family planning, involvement of men, Protection of Malaria Using Bed Nets and handwashing. Other include maternal and child health and nutrition, woman and child protection, WASH and stimulation and play.
PRACTICE 1:
Husband and wife should talk to each other frequently about family matters including child’s and mother’s health, growth and development; and positive discipline.

KEY MESSAGES

- Spousal communication is a gateway behavior. It helps partners understand each other’s needs; both physical and mental, and ensures a loving and healthy environment.
- Spouses who discuss everything on a daily basis can;
  - plan their family better.
  - take better care of each other’s needs.
  - space their children.
  - take better care of health, development and education of their child.
  - provide better opportunities to their child.
- Poor communication causes conflicts in relationships and can threaten the existence of the relationship. Couples who do not discuss about daily matters lack understanding and bonding, that not only affect them but their children as well.
PRACTICE 2:

Avoid unplanned pregnancy and keep space of 3 years between birth of children with mutual consensus.

Various methods of contraception:

- **Pills:** These contain different combinations of synthetic estrogens that interfere with ovulation. The woman is supposed to take one pill a day, preferably at the same time.

- **Condoms:** Condoms protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. They prevent direct contact between the male and female sexual organs.

- **Implants:** An implant is inserted in the arm and can last as long as three months, but it should be removed after that.

- **Sterilization:** This is a permanent method and cannot be reversed. In this method, fallopian tubes are cut and therefore cannot link the ovaries and uterus any more.

- **Tubal ligation:** It is another surgical procedure that involves cutting of fallopian tubes. This is another irreversible method.

- **Vasectomy:** This is surgical procedure for males. It is also irreversible and involves cutting and closing the part between the testes and urethra.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Birth spacing means interval between two child births. A woman should wait for at least 3 years for her next pregnancy. If she does not wait, she can face a lot of complications like, low birth weight baby, hemorrhage or birth related complications.

- Birth spacing is important because it gives time to the mother to heal properly and recover from her previous delivery.

- A mother with proper birth spacing can give her children and house proper attention which leads to a positive and healthy home environment.

- It also allows the family to plan their resources so that they are able to get the best out of available resources.

- Men should be involved in reproductive health and family planning.
PRACTICE 3:

Pregnant women should take tetanus toxid vaccine and should take at least four antenatal visits to a qualified doctor or health worker before delivery.

KEY MESSAGES

- Have a pregnancy test as soon as you miss one (1) menstrual period.
- Avail 4 check-ups spread over entire pregnancy, from a skilled provider
- Ask the health worker about when to come for ANC.
- ANC check-up will include:
  - Blood pressure examination
  - Blood and urine test
  - Provision of Iron/folic acid
  - Tetanus Toxoid (TT) injections
  - Health education on danger signs, nutrition, date of next visit, birth planning etc.
- Prepare for the birth of the child beforehand: save money, arrange for transport, find out people who can donate blood etc.
- Know about danger signs in pregnancy: any bleeding, fever, swollen hands and feet, blurred vision and fits
- Sleep under insecticide-impregnated bed net
- Sing and talk to your baby while he/she is still in your womb

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Antenatal care is preventive health care. It provides regular checkups and guidance for pregnant women in order to identify and avoid complications during pregnancy.
- A pregnant woman is advised to have at least 4 antenatal checkups. These checkups allow women to monitor fetal growth, get tetanus immunization, receive iron tablets and get advised for nutrition and safe delivery.
- It is recommended to consult only a trained skilled birth attendant. Seek an SBA if following danger signs appear;
  - Bleeding spotting or watery discharge.
  - Severe headaches or blurry vision.
  - Fits.
  - Swelling.
  - Lower abdominal pain.
- The pregnant woman and the family should plan and prepare for the delivery of the newborn baby.
  - Save money for delivery, transportation or other costs.
  - Organize for a transportation beforehand.
  - Identify people who can donate blood if needed.
  - Know the danger signs and when and where to seek care in case of danger signs.
PRACTICE 4:
Consult nearest hospital or qualified doctor during pregnancy and maternity to avoid complications.

KEY MESSAGES

- It is important to know who the skilled birth attendant is in your community.
- Couple should go together to the health facility for regular check-ups when the woman is pregnant.
- Skilled birth attendant can: attend delivery safely, recognize danger signs, advise the woman and her family about what actions to take in case of danger signs; manage and refer complications to appropriate health facility.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKER:

- Most of the maternal and newborn deaths occur at the time of delivery. A major reason behind these deaths is not consulting a skilled birth attendant in pregnancy and at the time of childbirth.
- A skilled birth attendant is a person who provides essential and emergency health-care services to women and their newborns during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period. This include: Lady health visitor, community midwife, nurse and doctor.
- By keeping an eye on danger signs and timely consulting an SBA can protect mother and her baby form expected complications.
- To ensure safe delivery, the woman and family particularly the husband should ensure three things before time. These are:
  - Selection of the place of delivery.
  - Transport.
  - Money.
- The role of family is crucial at the time of delivery. Monitor the health of the pregnant woman and inform the SBA if any danger signs appear.
- It is advised that women should get their postnatal checkup within 6 hours after child birth.
PRACTICE 5:
Start breastfeeding the baby immediately (within an hour) after birth of child and exclusively breastfeed the newborn for six months.

KEY MESSAGES

- Give colostrum (mother’s first milk) to your newborn as a first feed within one hour after delivery because it is nutritious and good for the baby.
- Breastfeed the baby on demand that is any time the baby needs to suck even at night.
- Select a support person before time and ensure she helps the woman in breastfeeding her baby.
- Continue mother’s milk and nothing else—not even water—for six months.
- Mothers milk protects babies from diseases.
- Eat well and drink lots of water so that the breastmilk can flow well to satisfy the child.
- When breastfeeding the baby, look at the baby in the eyes and smile at him/her, talk or sing to him/her. This will help in their cognitive development and establish a good relationship with your child.
- Provide ways for your child to see, hear, feel, smell, move freely, and touch you while breastfeeding.
- Slowly move colourful things for your child to see and reach for. Sample toys: shaker rattle, big ring on a string.
NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Provision of breast feeding to the baby within first hour after birth is called early initiation and has many benefits for both mother and child.
- "Colostrum" the first milk is nutrient rich and has all essential protecting factors that are required for a baby after birth.
- Exclusive breastfeeding means feeding a baby for first six months entirely on breastmilk without giving anything else. The more a mother will breastfeed her baby, the more will be the production of milk.
- Breastfeeding immediately after birth also ensures skin to skin contact between mother and her child which helps in initiating breastmilk early and increases the likelihood of exclusive breastfeeding.
- Exclusive breastfeeding develops a close bond between mother and her child. It is also a natural method of birth spacing.
- Breastfeeding protects against diarrhea and common childhood illnesses, such as pneumonia, and have long term benefits as well.
- For mothers, early initiation of breastfeeding immediately after delivery helps the uterus to contract and prevents woman from excessive bleeding post-delivery.
- Family’s role becomes crucial at this point. A family should identify a support person before time, who would assist the mother in breastfeeding her child.
- Coaching new mothers on how to breastfeed their babies and express breast milk as a means of maintaining lactation should be provided to expected mothers.
- Mother’s milk is a compete diet for the baby and the benefits of mother’s milk are lost if the child is given additional items like water, honey, rose water, cow or formula milk, tea, or other fluids.
- Breastmilk is easily absorbed as a child’s digestive system is not fully developed in the first 6 months.
- Breastmilk is hygienic, pure and easily available.
PRACTICE 6:
Provide warmth to the newborn, keep the umbilical cord clean and dry and keep applying chlorohexadin on it once daily for a week. And avoid bathing the newborn within first 24 hours after birth.

KEY MESSAGES
- Essential newborn care ENC is recommended for every newborn. Essential Newborn Care (ENC) should be given immediately after birth and continued till first 7 days after child’s birth. This essential care can be provided by any SBA.
  - It is advised to put child to mother’s chest immediately after birth and should not be bathed for at least 24 hours. The baby should be dried immediately and covered with a clean and dry towel or cloth.
  - Many newborn deaths occur due to breathing problems. It is advised for the family/SBA to rub baby’s back and feet immediately after birth in order to stimulate crying.
  - Newborns are more prone to diseases and infections. Therefore, newborns should be kept clean. Mother/family should wash hands before touching the baby. Umbilical cord and its surrounding area should be kept cleaned and dry and only prescribed medicine should be applied on it.
  - Family is advised to assist the mother in early initiation of breastfeeding. It is advised to breastfeed the baby within one hour after birth. Colostrum should be given as it contains all the nutrients that a newborn requires.
PRACTICE 7:
Register birth of boys and girls as soon as possible and obtain a birth certificate.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- It is the responsibility of parents/family to look for possible danger signs and consult a doctor immediately if a sign appears. These danger signs are:
  - Not feeding properly.
  - Skin colour turning blue/purple.
  - Convulsion.
  - Premature birth. (before 35th week)
  - Trouble breathing.
  - Very low or very high body temperature.
  - For a newborn, the most crucial time is right after birth. By taken safety measures during this period, newborns can be protected against possible diseases and complications.
PRACTICE 8:
Starting at six months of age, feed children with freshly prepared and hygienic variety of complementary food, while continuing to breastfeed babies up to two years or longer.

KEY MESSAGES

• Getting a child registered is a legal obligation and a fundamental right of the child. It is a legal proof of child’s birth, parentage and place of birth. With this registration the child will be able to have an identity and can avail other rights and services as well.

• In Pakistan, one can obtain birth registration either from birth certification authority or form National Data base and authority (NADRA). Parents/caregivers should register their babies at the nearest union council/village councils or through digital birth registration.

• Birth registration has many benefits;
  ▪ It establishes citizenship and national identity and offers protection against exploitation including child marriage, child labor, trafficking.
  ▪ It facilitates access to basic services like healthcare, child protection and education.
  ▪ It also facilitates future employment and financial assistance.
PRACTICE 9:
Starting at six months of age, feed children freshly prepared variety of complementary food, while continuing to breastfeed babies up to two years or longer.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- After 6 months, breast milk alone does not fulfil child’s nutritional requirements. Therefore, additional food should be introduced to child’s diet.
- Around 6 months, a child is ready to take additional food other than breastmilk. If not given on time or inappropriately, the growth of an infant can be affected can cause malnutrition and stunting.
- At 6 months, a child requires smooth transition from breastmilk to semi-solids and ultimately to solid foods. First introduction should be semi solids, like yogurt, kheer, firni, and porridge. At 9 months, finger foods like home-made potato chips, slice of any fruit or vegetable like apple, banana, carrot etc., and mashed food can be added to yogurt etc. By the age of 2 years, a child learns to self-feed and should be given everyday normal meals like roti with gravy, etc.
- It is important to emphasize that the meal given to child should be healthy and contain all important nutrients. Eggs, meat, beans, fish, and fresh vegetables and fruits are some of the good examples.
- Increase the consistency and quantity of food with time. In the beginning, the food should be neither too thick nor too thin. Similarly, an infant should be given 2-3 meals per day at the age of 6-8 months, whereas at 9-23 months, a child should be given 3-4 meals per day along with 1-2 additional snack items. Continue breastfeeding the child till 2 years.
- Also add fortified foods or vitamin-mineral supplements in child’s diet whenever needed.
- During illness, increase the fluid intake along with breastfeeding, if the child is still breastfed.
- Parents/caregivers should ensure that clean and safe water is used to prepare food.
- Caregivers should wash their hands with soap and water before feeding babies and also wash the babies hands.
- Caregivers should talk to the babies while feeding and respond to them as they make sound or talk to you.
- Fathers should play an active role in feeding the babies.
- Avoid giving your child unhealthy market made unhygienic food items, like soft drinks, junk food items like candies, chips etc.
### Preparation of food

1. **Pureed fruit**

   **Ingredients**
   
   Fresh apple, pear, peach, apricot or dried prunes (stones removed)

   **Method**
   
   If using fresh fruit: wash, peel, core and dice it.
   If using dried fruit: wash and dice it, then soak it in just enough water to cover it for at least 15 minutes before cooking.
   Place fresh fruit or soaked dried fruit and any remaining liquid in a saucepan.
   Add just enough water to cover the bottom of the saucepan and cook quickly until fruit is soft.
   Press pulp through a strainer or puree in a blender.

2. **Banana rice pudding**

   **Ingredients**
   
   3/4 cup cooked rice
   3/4 cup (180mL) expressed breastmilk, formula or full-cream milk (if over 12 months)
   1/2 banana, mashed

   **Method**
   
   Mix together the cooked rice, milk and banana.
   Heat in a saucepan over low heat until milk is absorbed, stirring frequently.
   Cool and serve warm or cold.

3. **Mix vegetables kichdi**

   **Ingredients**
   
   Rice – ½ cup
   Moong dal – ½ cup
   Mixed vegetables washed and chopped (potato, carrot, peas, beans) – 1 cup
   Ghee – 1 tsp
   Turmeric – a pinch
   Cumin seeds – ½ tsp

   **Method**
   
   Clean and wash the dal and rice, and soak them in water for half an hour. Heat the ghee in a cooker with the cumin seeds until the seeds crackle, then add the other ingredients and water. Let this mixture cook for 4 whistles, and then mix it with a spoon and give it to your baby.
PRACTICE 10:
Take all girls and boys for vaccination at birth, 6 weeks, 10 weeks, 14 weeks, 9 months and 15 months for full course of immunization to protect them from 12 diseases.

KEY MESSAGES

- Immunization prevents a child from deadly diseases and strengthens child’s ability to fight with these diseases. It also ensures child health and development.
- A child should be given 6 doses of vaccines in total, starting right after birth till 15 months of child’s age. Some additional doses can be given at a later stage.
- These vaccines are the cheapest way of preventing childhood diseases. Every child should receive recommended vaccinations and complete their vaccination course. Parents/family should ensure that their child receives all immunizations.
- Interact with the child by talking, playing or give him a toy to distract him from crying after vaccination session.
- There are two types of immunization vaccines; injectable and oral. The schedule for child immunization is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Vaccine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>At birth</td>
<td>BCG, OPV-0, Hep-B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>At 6th week</td>
<td>OPV-I, Pneumococcal-I, Rota virus-I, Penta-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>At 10th week</td>
<td>OPV-II, Pneumococcal-II, Rota virus-II, Penta-II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>At 14th week</td>
<td>OPV-III, Pneumococcal-III, IPV, Penta-III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>At 9 months</td>
<td>Measles-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>At 15 months</td>
<td>Measles-II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS

These vaccines provide protection against 10 deadly diseases. These diseases and their causes are:

1. **Tuberculosis**: It is usually spread through breathing and can harm lungs and brain, if not treated on time.

2. **Polio**: Pakistan is one of the third countries with poliovirus cases. Polio is a highly infectious viral disease which attacks the nervous system and can cause permanent paralysis, especially in lower limbs. Polio is spread through contaminated water, food, human saliva or faeces.

3. **Diarrhea/Rota Virus**: Rota virus is the number one cause of diarrhea. If left untreated, Rota virus can cause dehydration which is a leading cause of death in children. Every year 53,300 children die in Pakistan because of this virus. Its symptoms include fever, belly pain, vomiting, watery stools.

4. **Pneumonia**: It is a lung infection that can also cause death in infants. It spreads through breathing and causes inflammation which results in stiffness of lungs and makes it difficult to breathe.

5. **Pertussis (Whooping cough)**: Pertussis causes violent cough that makes breathing difficult and can also harm child’s internal organs if untreated. It is spread from one child to another through cough, sneeze or by touching infected areas.

6. **Tetanus**: It is an infectious disease caused by bacteria found in soil. It enters the body through wounds, cuts or burns. If untreated, it can cause throat paralysis and affect the respiratory muscles which can lead to death.

7. **Measles**: Measles is an infectious viral disease which is highly contagious. It can spread through sneezing, coughing and physical contact. Its symptoms include fever, respiratory involvement and rash. If not treated, this disease can be fatal.

8. **Meningitis**: Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes that protect brain and spinal cord. It can be bacterial, viral or fungal. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, severe muscle pain, stiff neck and rash. If left untreated it can result in death.

9. **Hepatitis-B**: This disease is caused by hepatitis B virus which causes a contagious liver disease. It can be transmitted from person to person through exchange of blood or other body fluids. It can also be transmitted from an infected mother to her child at birth. Its symptoms include jaundice, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and loss of appetite.

10. **Diphtheria**: Diphtheria is a contagious bacterial disease. It can spread from person to person and attacks the respiratory system. If not treated on time, this disease can affect the internal organs that can result in death.
PRACTICE 11:

Ensure that children, adolescents and women receive adequate amounts of micro nutrients (vitamin A, iron, zinc and folic acid) either in their diet or through supplements.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Children and pregnant women must take foods that are rich in minerals, vitamins, iron, fiber, fatty acids and iodine. Micronutrients produces enzymes and hormones that play an important role in proper growth and developments. These micronutrients:
  - Help in the development of bones and metabolism.
  - Develop immunity in the body against germs and infections.
  - Help the body grow.
  - Prevent goiter.
  - Prevents anemia and helps in brain development.
  - Strengthen eyesight.
- It is also advised to deworm your children. Deworming helps the body get rid of parasites such as roundworms and tapeworms and improves mental and physical development.
- Taking nutritious diet and use of iron folate during pregnancy is important for both mother and her baby. A woman is recommended to take proper nutrition as advised by her doctor/nutritionist.
- Iron helps in the development of baby's brain cells and provides a positive boost to brain development.
- During pregnancy, a woman should take foods that are rich in iron, proteins, iodine, zinc, and vitamin C & D. Intake of foods such as, meat, fish, milk, fruits and vegetables is recommended.
- Families who have limited resources can always use alternatives. For example, women who cannot afford meat can use legumes and beans. Similarly, leafy green vegetables are a good alternative for iron.
- Iron deficient diet of the pregnant mother can result in low birth weight baby and also increases the chances of diseases in the newborn.
- Iron helps in reducing fatigue, weakness, and anemia; which can cause complications during delivery.
- Besides the pregnant mothers, the lactating mothers should also use iron folate at least for first 6 months.
- Children and adolescent girls should also be fed micronutrient rich food.
PRACTICE 12:

Protect children and pregnant women in malaria and other viruses endemic areas by ensuring that they sleep under insecticide-treated bed nets.

KEY MESSAGES

- Malaria and Dengue, both spread through mosquitoes and their symptoms include fever, vomiting and diarrhea, headaches, fatigue and muscular pains. Malaria or dengue viruses are passed on from one person to another person through a mosquito bite.
- Mosquito infested diseases are life threatening and therefore it is important to take precautionary measures. Using a bed net ensures safety from these deadly diseases.
- Protection from these deadly diseases is very important, especially for pregnant women, babies and children. Malaria and Dengue can cause anemia and can damage heart, lungs and liver. They can also cause miscarriage and premature birth in women. Therefore, it is advised that people, especially pregnant women and children should sleep under bed nets.
- It is advised to keep houses, drains and vegetation around the house always clean. Avoid containers and objects where water can be stored and allows mosquito breeding. Always keep water pots covered.
- Remember! These deadly diseases can kill. It is advised to consult a doctor as soon as a symptom appears.
PRACTICE 13:
Continue to feed and offer more fluids including breast milk when children are sick and wash hands before feeding.

KEY MESSAGES

- Parents/family can deal with simple cases of illnesses at home and monitor the recovery of the patient.
- Pregnant women and children are more likely to suffer with illnesses than can be treated with simple home treatment.
- A child needs special care and treatment during illness. When the child is not eating or feeding, or not active, it is more likely that child is sick. The mother/family should find out why the child is not participating in eating or feeding activities.
- It is important to keep an eye on child’s health and provide them with timely home treatment. Consult a doctor in case of emergency. Some of the common signs of illness are:
  - High fever.
  - Loss of appetite.
  - Sweating.
  - Persistent cough and difficulty in breathing.
  - Vomiting.
  - Diarrhea.
  - Unnecessary crying.
NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

**Home treatment for high fever:** In case of high fever, remove child’s clothes and cool the body with the help of a piece of cloth soaked in luke warm water. This will help lower the body temperature. Also, give more fluids to your child and breastfeed repeatedly in case of babies. If the baby/child has convulsions/fits or is unable to drink or is abnormally sleepy, take him/her to a health facility immediately.

**Home treatment for Diarrhea:** Diarrhea is passing of watery stools 3-4 times in one day and one of the main reasons of death in young children. It drains water and nutrients from the body which leads to dehydration. Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) and Zinc is the best way to treat this illness. Give one cup of ORS to your child after every stool. Always keep ORS and Zinc packets at home. It is also important to keep the house clean and ensure proper sanitation. Wash hands before and before and after cooking, feeding child, and using latrine.

**How to prepare ORS:**

- Wash hands with soap and clean and safe water.
- Take a clean jug, cup, spoon, a packet of ORS and clean boiled cool water. Mix the ORS sachet in 4 cups of water.

**Home treatment for Cough:**

In case of cough, give your child more fluids like warm water with honey, herbal tea etc. It helps soothe the throat and hence reduces the intensity of coughing. Don’t give any medicine until and unless prescribed by a doctor. Take your child to the hospital immediately, if the child starts breathing faster than usual or has difficulty in breathing.
PRACTICE 14:
Support children's mental and social development, by responding to their needs and by stimulating them through talking, playing and providing healthy interactions and environment.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Respond to your child’s sounds and interests. Call the child’s name, and see your child respond.
- 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.
- 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.
- Give your child clean, safe household things to handle, bang, and drop. Sample toys: containers with lids, metal pot and spoon.
- Help your child to talk. Show and talk about nature, pictures and things.
- When children participate in ECD activities their overall development is enhanced.
- Fathers should take an active role in playing with children, taking them outdoors to play, responding to their needs etc.
- Grandparents and other members of families can also interact with children.
NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Child development is a process every child goes through.
- During this process, a child's mental, physical, creative social and emotional development occurs and the child learns various skills like sitting, talking, communicating, etc. These skills are called developmental milestones. These developmental milestones are divided into 5 categories;

1. Physical development:
   a. Fine motor skill development
      This includes a child’s ability to grasp or hold things by using small muscles like fingers, hands or wrists. For example, holding a spoon or plate, holding a pencil and writing, turning the pages of a book, etc. Fine motor skills develop after gross motor skills.
   b. Gross motor skill development
      It deals with a child’s ability to make larger movements by using arms, legs, body, etc. Crawling, jumping, walking and running are a few examples of gross motor skills.

2. Cognitive Development:
   Cognitive development is the building of thought processes, including thinking, remembering, problem solving, and decision-making. It helps a child understand about self and the surrounding environment. Brain development is a part of cognitive development.

3. Speech and language development:
   It deals with child’s ability to use and understand language. This includes using of words, talking, reading and communicating. By talking and reading to the child caregivers can help the child learn this skill faster.

4. Social and Emotional Development:
   It deals with child’s ability to interact with people and surrounding. It includes a child's ability to develop relationships, experiences, expressions, and management of emotions while dealing with others. Some of the examples are smiling waving, sharing, etc.

   - The early years, especially the first 2 years of a child’s life are very crucial. This is the time when a child is growing and learning quickly. By providing a child with proper nutrition along with love and care and opportunities to explore and learn will not only improve a child’s physical health but will also enhance his/her mental capabilities.
   - Play & stimulation helps stimulate a child’s brain and it is something that a child needs. It is an interesting way of learning and helps activate the brain and improves child’s physical and mental capabilities. Parents can play an important part and can teach their children different things through stimulation and play. It also develops and strengthens the bond between child and parents.
PRACTICE 15:
Ensure that men actively participate in providing nurturing and care to children and are involved in reproductive health initiatives.

KEY MESSAGES

Men should play an active role by;

- Taking women to hospital for regular check-ups during pregnancy.
- Ensuring that a birth preparedness plan is in place.
- Emotionally supporting women during pregnancy, childbirth and in child rearing.
- Ensuring a safe environment for their forthcoming child.
- Ensuring that women get enough food and rest during pregnancy.
- Men should help in feeding the child, playing with him/her and interacting with the child.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKER:

- A woman needs extra care and support during pregnancy and after childbirth. A husband should accompany her for her antenatal checkups, provide her with healthy nutrition and take care of her physical, emotional and nutritional requirements during this time.
- Only a woman with healthy psychosocial wellbeing can deliver a healthy baby. A woman cannot give her child the full attention until and unless her wellbeing is taken care of and this is only possible when she has support from her husband.
- It is also important that partners should communicate on everyday matters. Having a regular conversation about family matters is a sign of a healthy relationship. Mutual understanding and decision making ensures child’s better upbringing and happy family.
PRACTICE 16:
Seek appropriate care and social support during pre-natal period to manage maternal mental health.

Importance of mother’s mental health:
Mental health or psychological well-being is the ability to function well and form and maintain relationships to be happy in your everyday life. In severe cases, some mothers suffering might lead to malfunctioning and as a result, the children’s growth and development may be negatively affected. Maternal mental health problems are treatable. Mother’s child care demands and household chores are often overwhelming for some women. This condition often referred also as parental burn-out might result lead to depression. This condition is often prevalent in women who have just given birth (postpartum depression) and mostly with no social support.

Barriers to seek treatment:
- Stigma and negative cultural attitudes towards mental illness.
- lack of universal health coverage (UHC) for mental health.
- lack of social support system.

KEY MESSAGES
- When pregnant get a family member to support you.
- Spouse/partner should support and engage in child care to reduce women’s workload.
- Do yoga and breathing exercises and take your child for a walk outside the home.
- Play with your children as it is fun and relaxing.
- Eat properly and sleep well.
- Join a mother group or an association of women with children.
- Talk to your SBA or Lady Health Worker in your community.
PRACTICE 17:
Ensure every member of family uses laterine and afterwards washes hand with soap, and also after helping children using toilet and disposal of feces.

KEY MESSAGES

- Wash hands with soap and water before:
  - Preparing and serving food.
  - Feeding children.
- All family members wash hands with soap and water after:
  - Using toilet.
  - Disposing off feces.
- Dispose of all faeces properly in a latrine.
- Baby faeces is more dangerous than adult feces and clean up a child who defecates immediately and dispose feces in the toilet.
- Drink clean and safe water.
- Use toilet and keep it clean.
- Parents should train and help children wash their hands and to use toilets.
- Children need to brush their teeth at least twice a day. If no tooth brush, they should use chewing sticks.
- Teach good hygiene practices like hand washing with soap, use of latrines and drinking clean water to your child at early age, he/she will pick up the good habits which will guide him/her the whole life.

NOTES FOR THE FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Washing hands is the first step towards healthy practices. Washing hands properly with soap prevents spreading of germs.
- It is advised to wash hands properly before and after eating, feeding, using latrine and disposing of faeces.
- Keeping your house clean and ensuring proper sanitation can prevent diarrhea, which is one of the most common diseases in young children.
- Babies and young children often put their hands in their mouth therefore it is important to wash their hands regularly.
- Always drink clean water and keep water pots covered.
PRACTICE 18:

If you notice any delay or deficiency in the physical or psychological growth and development of the child, please consult nearest doctor or health worker for diagnosis and treatment.

KEY MESSAGES

- Parents/Caregivers should closely monitor the growth of the child.
- When the child is weighed, the weight should be plotted on a graph.
- Parents should consult a health worker and/or go to health facility when they notice the child is not making progress.
- Play with children. It ensures optimal development and also screens the development delay. Allow the child the freedom to sing and dance; in this way the sense of rhythm and movement is learnt by the child.
- Clap your hands and smile to show the child you recognize and support his/her efforts. This is good stimulation and it is a way of giving appropriate attention to a child with a disability. The parent/caregiver should continue with stimulation even when there is no direct response from the child.
- Don’t lock the child in the house. Take the child out for a walk and play so far as she/he is not hurt. Provide the child with learning opportunities with support and time investment.

NOTES TO FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Children have similar milestones but their pace to achieve these milestones vary from child to child. Some children may be faster or slower than others.
- It is the responsibility of their parents to keep an eye on their child as they know their child best and take them to a doctor or specialist if they observe any delay or disability.
- Children with disabilities and developmental delays should be respected and supported. These children should be given equal chance to participate in activities and should be allowed to learn & play.
- Height and weight of the child should be monitored every month. Consult the specialist if no change appears in height or weight.

Stages of Child Development and how parents can support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>What children can do at this age</th>
<th>What children need including appropriate, sensitive and responsive caregiving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conception/pregnancy</td>
<td>• Fetus</td>
<td>• Ensure recommended Antenatal visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Movement in womb</td>
<td>• Seek help of health provider in case of problems and follow advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Eat balance diet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sing and talk to our child in womb/ listen to soft music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth – 3 months</td>
<td>Protection from physical danger</td>
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<tr>
<td>A newborn communicates through crying and can see 8-12 inches away.</td>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding on demand/ If feeding then provide adequate nutrition and talk and make feeding a fun session for the child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin to smile, track people and objects with their eyes</td>
<td>Adequate health care, such as immunization, oral rehydration therapy and hygiene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer faces and bright colors</td>
<td>Appropriate language stimulation (play and communicate with the child and tell stories through pictures for the child to see)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Turn towards sound</td>
<td>Frequent skin-to-skin contact with child (hugging carrying etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make eye contact, mimics sounds and open and closes hands</td>
<td>Take child outside the house and show nature and communicate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover feet and hands and at times take to mouth</td>
<td>Motor and sensory stimulation</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 to 6 months</th>
<th>Protection from physical danger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smile and laugh</td>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding and if feeding then provide adequate nutrition and talk and make feeding a fun session for the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop preferences generally to primary caregivers -parents and older siblings</td>
<td>Adequate health care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat actions with interesting results</td>
<td>Appropriate language stimulation with reading and story telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to the voices and start seeing colors better.</td>
<td>Motor and sensory stimulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond when spoken to</td>
<td>Provide the child with coloured toys and non-harmful objects to play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laugh and babble</td>
<td>Frequent skin-to-skin contact with child (hugging carrying etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitate sounds</td>
<td>Take child outside the house and show nature and communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore hands and feet</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 to 12 months</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Remember simple events</td>
<td>• In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require support in acquiring:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify themselves and body parts, and familiar voices</td>
<td>• Motor, language and thinking skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand their own name and other common words</td>
<td>• Developing independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand simple words, say first meaningful words</td>
<td>• Learning self-control</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explore objects and find hidden objects</td>
<td>• Opportunities for play with other children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Put objects in containers</td>
<td>• Health care must include de-worming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sit alone</td>
<td>• Provide problem solving toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pull themselves up to stand and walk</td>
<td>• Send child on little errands in the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hearing is fully developed</td>
<td>• Sing favourite songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protection from physical danger</td>
<td>• Solve simple puzzles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adequate proper nutrition</td>
<td>• Praise according and provide hug or carry at times just to comfort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate language stimulation</td>
<td>• Sing and dance with child or provide opportunities to listen to music and do moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allow child join in little task while you supervise</td>
<td>• Hug your child and praise for little actions that the child does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take child for a walk to nature or outside the house</td>
<td>• Talk and explain things to the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sing and dance with child or provide opportunities to listen to music and do moves</td>
<td>• Hug your child and praise for little actions that the child does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hug your child and praise for little actions that the child does</td>
<td>• Talk and explain things to the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talk and explain things to the child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 to 5 years</td>
<td>5 to 8 years</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Develop a longer attention span  
• Talk a lot, ask many questions  
• Test physical skills and courage with caution  
• Reveal feeling in dramatic play  
• Like to play with friends, do not like to lose, share and take turns sometimes | • In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to:  
• Develop fine motor skills  
• Continue expanding language skills through talking, reading, and singing  
• Learn cooperation by helping and sharing  
• Experiment with pre-writing and pre-reading skills  
• Provide toys to stimulate thinking  
• Provide opportunities to draw and use fingers and hands often |
| • Gain curiosity about people and how the world works  
• Show more interest in numbers, letters, reading and writing  
• Gain more confidence and use words to express feelings and cope  
• Play cooperatively  
• Develop interest in final products | • In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to:  
• Develop numeracy and reading skills  
• Engage in problem solving  
• Practice teamwork  
• Develop sense of personal competency  
• Practice questioning and observing  
• Acquire basic life skills  
• Attend basic education and support from parents especially the first day at school, school occasions |
PRACTICE 19:
Prevent physical, psychological and social neglect, abuse and exploitation of children and women and protect them from harmful practices like child marriages.

KEY MESSAGES

- Protect children from physical, sexual and psychological abuse and neglect and give them love and care so that they can develop and grow which helps children feel a sense of belongingness and self-confidence.
- Perpetrators of sexual violence are usually close relatives and neighbours.
- Young people and parents need to be aware and attain skills to prevent violence.
- All girls and boys should be enrolled to school with no child left behind. Children should not be allowed to work.
- Child marriage and child labour should be avoided.
- Comfort an abused child, and take the child to the nearest clinic or One Stop Centre.
- Positive discipline is mutually respectful and encouraging which is kind and firm at the same time.
- Positive discipline is effective in the long-term as it considers what the child is thinking, feeling, learning, and deciding about himself/herself and his/her world.
- Positive discipline teaches important social and life skills such as respect, concern for others, problem solving, and cooperation as well as the skills to contribute to the home, school and the larger community.
- If the child does something wrong, as a parent, talk tone to one with the child calmly so that he understands the consequences of his action.
NOTES TO FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Intentionally mistreating a person physically, socially or psychologically in order to harm or injure that person is called abuse. There are many types of abuse:
  - Physical abuse.
  - Psychological abuse.
  - Verbal abuse.
  - Intimate partner abuse.
  - Domestic abuse.

- Violence means when a person is physically mistreated with an aim of hurting or killing. This include:
  - Rape & sexual assault.
  - Childhood sexual abuse.
  - Marital rape.
  - Human Trafficking.
  - Child marriage.

- LHW/other frontline workers/Parents should be aware of the signs that indicate abuse in women and children. These include:
  - Bruises.
  - Burns.
  - Eye injuries.
  - Difficulty in walking or sitting.
  - Withdrawn or usually quiet.
  - Signs of fear.
  - Emotional signs of abuse like anger, sadness, or low self esteem.
  - Learning difficulties.
  - Disturbing thoughts.

- Abuse and violence are very common and it is the role of the parents/family to provide children and women a safe environment. Women should be aware of their rights and the rights of their children and should not be hesitant in seeking help.

- Parents should provide their children with an open and friendly environment and communicate on a daily basis. Children learn from their surroundings, therefore, parents should avoid aggressive behavior in front of their children.
PRACTICE 20:
Protect toddlers, young children and teach older children on how to stay safe from hazards.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Dangerous objects should be kept out of reach of children and keep sharp objects such as knives, sharp sticks, scissors and pens in a safe place.
- Keep young children away from dangerous areas such as fires and poisonous substances.
- Pay attention to your child and protect children from injury and accident, and provide treatment when necessary.
- Ensure safe and healthy environment-keep children away from rivers, sea or from getting close to fire or electric sockets in the house.
- Keep a first aid box at home and lock up medicines and other household cleaners away from the child.
- Consult a doctor immediately if the child is injured.

**NOTES TO FRONTLINE WORKERS:**

- It is equally important that parents should provide their children with safe environment as children are often at a risk of sustaining injuries. In case of an accident, parents should be well prepared with necessary knowledge and skills. Following are a few preventive measures;
  - Keep all medicines, drugs and potentially harmful chemicals out of reach of children.
  - Keep your children away from the kitchen. Keep sharp objects like forks, knives etc., in a safe place. Also, keep the stoves or matchboxes at a level where your child cannot reach.
  - Keep anything that can suffocate a child out of child, reach like blocks, polythene bags, etc. It is also important to know about the first aid procedures and make a first aid box that should available at all times. Some of the first aid measures are:

**Burns/ Blisters**

- Get the child/person away from the heat source to stop the burning.
- Cool the burn with cool running water for 20 minutes. Avoid using ice, iced water, or any greasy substances such as cream.
- Do not pop the blisters.
- Reduce sun exposure.
- Take the child/person to a hospital.
Animal Bites:
Animals are a major source of transmitting rabies which can be fatal. Parents/Families are advised to take their domestic animals for proper vaccination and keep your children away from the animals. In case of an animal bite;
- Wash the infected area gently with soap and water.
- Cover the area with a sage and sterilized cloth/bandage.
- Take the child/person immediately to the hospital.

Insect Stings:
To avoid sting bites it is advised to cover the body properly, avoid walking in grass barefoot. Keep the house clean and insect free and apply insect repellent to exposed skin. In case of an insect bite;
- Move to a safe place in order to avoid more stings.
- Wash the infected area with cool water and soap.
- Apply a cold piece of cloth to prevent swelling.
- Take the person/child to the hospital in case of emergency.

Suffocation & Choking:
Parents should be careful when a child learns to crawl or walk as it is the time when a child requires more attention. Many children at this age like to put everything in their mouth. It is advised that parents should keep their environment safe for their children. Remove any harmful items that can cause choking or suffocation and avoid giving food to children that are easy to choke on. In case of choking or suffocation;
- Hold the baby face-down along your thigh with their head lower than their bottom. Give them five blows firmly on their back between the shoulder blades.
- Open windows and doors to allow abundant supply of fresh air to the child.
- Give cardiopulmonary resuscitation. (CPR)
- Take the child to the hospital immediately.

Poisoning:
Always keep drugs, medicines or chemicals out of reach of children. Children mostly get poisoned by things that are not considered poisonous like shampoo, cosmetics, washing powder and detergents etc. In case of poisoning;
- Induce vomiting by putting a clean finger in the child's mouth. Do not give any medicine for vomiting.
- Clean the remaining substance around mouth.
- Rinse mouth with water.
- Take the child immediately to a nearby hospital.

Cuts and Wounds:
- Apply direct pressure on the cut or wound with a clean cloth, tissue, or piece of gauze until bleeding stops.
- Gently clean with soap and warm water.
- Apply antibiotic cream to reduce risk of infection and cover with a clean cloth.
- Take the child/person to a nearby health facility and follow the health workers' advice.
PRACTICE 21:
Make sure that children are brought up with warmth, care, kind words and gentle guidance and positive discipline from parents and family members.

KEY MESSAGES

- Positive discipline helps a child learn self-control and with that comes self-esteem and confidence.
- Rather than use corporal punishment to discipline the children, let us use positive discipline.
- Positive discipline is a non-violent, continuous and consistent process of guiding a child to behave in a manner that is acceptable.
- Positive discipline is about teaching children right from wrong including setting limits and following through with a child.
- Parents should avoid telling children that they are dumb, bad etc and should not compare children with each other.
- Verbal abuse causes children to feel afraid and less confident and affects the emotions of children and also leads to health problems of children.
- Corporal punishment and any humiliating or frightening punishment are forbidden, e.g., spanking, hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking, biting, or any form of physical punishment.
- Physical punishment is not only less effective but have more harmful consequences associated with unhappiness and depression later in life.
- Parents can hurt children by humiliating them or continually criticizing their behavior. Pay more attention to the good behavior of the child and praise.
- Parents and care givers should be patient with children.
PRACTICE 22:
Support children’s learning, enroll and keep girls and boys in school until the age of 18.

KEY MESSAGES

- Enroll the children in early care and development or learning centres or if there are no early learning centres, send them to Kachi classes.
- When children participate in ECD activities their overall development is enhanced.
- Participate in meetings, activities etc. of the ECD centre of your child or visit the centre from time to time as that can boost the self-esteem of the child.
- Children have a right to education; it is important that they are enrolled and stay in school until the age of 16 years.
- Encourage the children to stay in school as it will not only benefit them but also the family and community.
- Supervise the children in their learning and take active interest in their schoolwork.
- Ask your children about their day in school and work or to recount an event they attended
- Prepare and ensure that your child eats and sleep swell when going to school.

NOTES TO FRONTLINE WORKERS:

- Education plays a vital role in our lives as it provides knowledge, skill, values. It teaches us how to read and write, how to think and communicate, and how we can make our lives better.
- It is a gradual process which brings positive change in an individual’s thinking and reasoning and his/her ability to achieve a better living.
- It strengthens our beliefs and helps us distinguish between right and wrong.
- Every child should be provided with education and should be enrolled in schools for formal education when a child reaches 3 years of age.
- It is a basic right of every individual; both boys and girls to receive education.
- To equip a child with education is the responsibility of his/her parents and family. They must ensure that their child is enrolled in a school.
- Without education a child cannot achieve his/her full potential. Education opens new horizons for an individual and;
  - Allows the child to have a better standard of living
  - Allows the child to explore better options and better jobs
  - Helps the child in better decision making