



NURTURING CARE

FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

A closer look at the nurturing care components



Component	Definition	Illustrative examples of interventions
<p>Good health</p> 	<p>Refers to the health and well-being of the children <u>and</u> their caregivers. Why both? We know that the physical and mental health of caregivers can affect their ability to care for the child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family planning - HIV testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV - Essential newborn care including kangaroo care for small babies - Immunization of mother and child - Growth monitoring and counselling - Promotion of health and well-being including health care seeking behaviour - Prevention and treatment of childhood illness and caregiver physical and mental health problems - Care for children with developmental difficulties or disabilities
<p>Adequate nutrition</p> 	<p>Refers to maternal <u>and</u> child nutrition. Why both? We know that the nutritional status of the mother during pregnancy affects her health and well-being and that of her unborn child. After birth, the mother's nutritional status affects her ability provide adequate care to her young child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternal nutrition - Early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, continued breastfeeding after 6 months with appropriate and responsive complementary feeding - Micronutrient supplementation for mother and child, as needed - Adequate physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep in early childhood - Management of moderate and severe malnutrition as well as overweight and obesity
<p>Safety and security</p> 	<p>Refers to safe and secure environments for children and their families. Includes physical dangers, emotional stress, environmental risks (e.g., pollution), and access to food and water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Birth registration - Food security and access to clean water - Clean indoor and outdoor air - Good hygiene - Protecting children from physical punishment, abuse, and neglect - Safe spaces to play - Social care services including cash transfer to the most vulnerable families



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<p>Opportunities for early learning</p> 	<p>Refers to any opportunity for the baby, toddler or child to interact with a person, place, or object in their environment.</p> <p>Recognizes that every interaction (positive or negative) or absence of an interaction is contributing to the child’s brain development and laying the foundation for later learning.</p>	<p><i>At home and in child care spaces:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities that encourage young children to move their bodies, activate their five senses, hear and use language, and explore - Using daily routines to talk to, play, and interact with baby/toddler/child - Telling stories (including by elders) - Exploring books together and reading to the baby/toddler/child - Talking to and with the baby/toddler/child - Smiling, imitating/copying, and simple games (e.g., peek a boo) - Age-appropriate play with household objects and people - Quality standards in formal child care spaces
<p>Responsive caregiving</p> 	<p>Refers to the ability of the parent/caregiver to notice, understand, and respond to their child’s signals in a timely and appropriate manner.</p> <p>Considered the foundational component because responsive caregivers are better able to support the other four components.</p>	<p><i>Across multiple services and touchpoints:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modelling and encouraging caregivers to make eye contact, smile, cuddle, praise - Helping caregivers to notice their child’s cues and respond appropriately (sensitivity and responsiveness) – for example signs of hunger, satiety, illness, emotional distress, interest to play, pleasure - Supporting caregivers to identify and use everyday moments to communicate and play with their child (e.g., feeding, bedtime) - Encouraging caregivers to develop safe and mutually rewarding relationships with their child (e.g., they enjoy being together)

For more information and examples see:
[Nurturing Care Framework for Early Childhood Development](#) (pp. 12-19)
[The five components of nurturing care](http://www.nurturing-care.org) at www.nurturing-care.org