

# Child Development 1



The  
Principles

Online Version



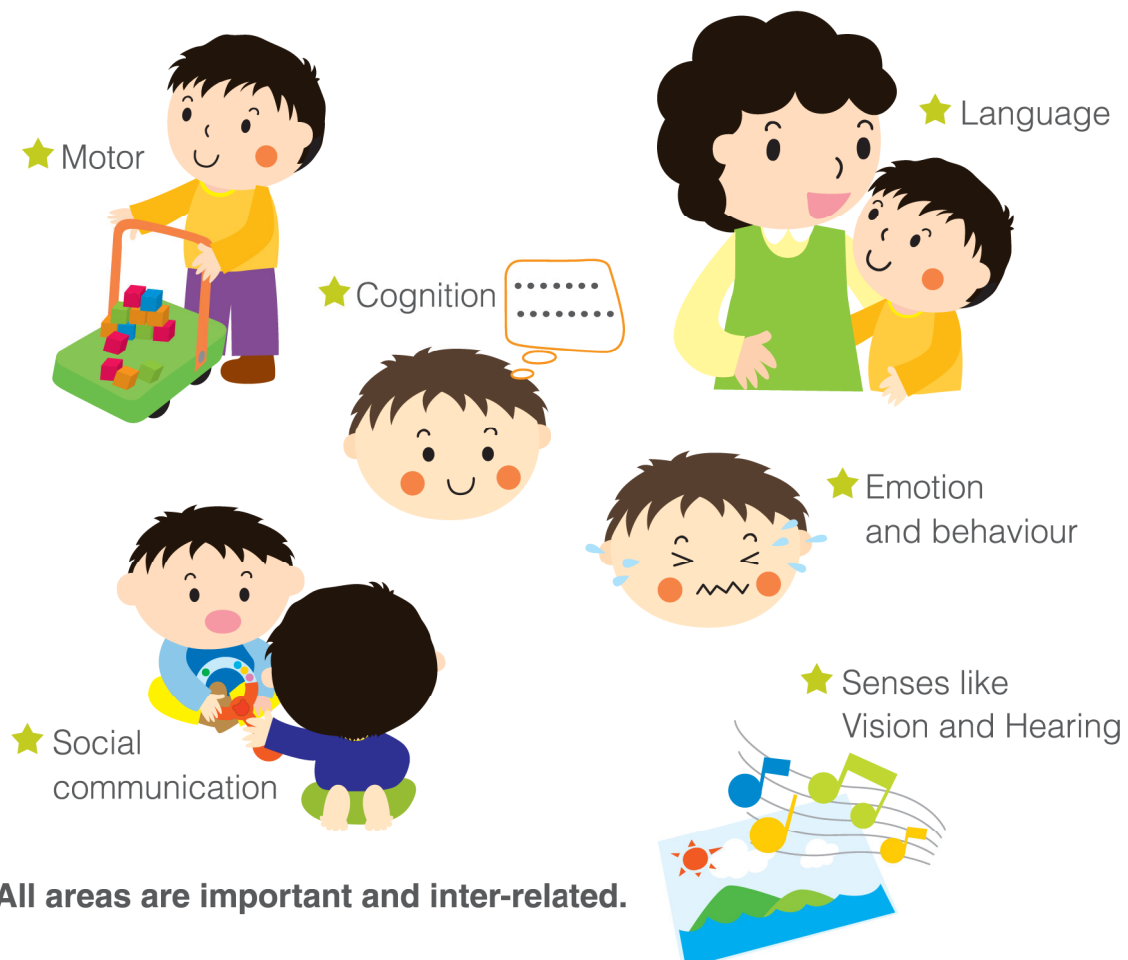
Department of Health

## The Principles

During the first few years of a baby's life, the brain grows and develops at a fascinating rate. The baby rapidly progresses from entirely dependent infant to an independent youngster capable of basic ways of thinking, adapting, and problem solving. While **genetics** is important in determining your child's abilities and capabilities, the role of the **environment** is of equal importance in affecting your child's learning social and emotional development.

Development is a **continuous process**. The child goes through each stage in a predetermined **sequence**. However, each child is **UNIQUE**. Your baby will develop at his or her own **pace**. While children tend to exhibit certain attributes, behaviours and reach milestones at certain ages, a wide range of developmental progresses can be normal. It is therefore difficult to be exact about what should be expected at each stage of a particular child's development.

## What are the different areas of development



## What your child needs

Children need certain elements to grow and develop to their full potential especially in the early stages of life. He or she needs:

- ➔ to feel special, loved, and valued.
- ➔ to feel secure.
- ➔ to feel confident.
- ➔ guidance.
- ➔ a balanced experience of freedom and limits.
- ➔ exposure to a diverse environment filled with a variety of stimulation.



## How you can help

By providing an appropriate environment for your child, you can make a difference to your child's development.

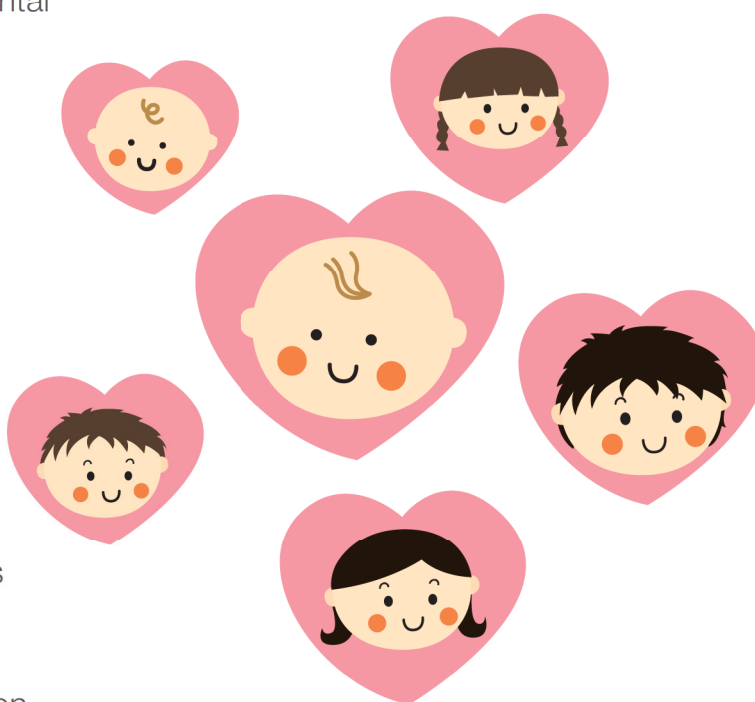
- ✓ Provide an **interesting** and **safe physical environment**, along with and **developmentally appropriate** play materials, for your child to explore and learn.
- ✓ **Respond warmly and contingently** to your child's behaviour: smiling when your child smiles, listening and responding to your child's questions however briefly.



- ✓ **Talk** to and with your child often, using lively, descriptively rich, and accurate language, encourage him to express himself.
- ✓ **Avoid imposing too much restriction**, punishment or control. Instead, give your child room to explore and even opportunity to make mistakes within safe boundaries.
- ✓ Have **reasonable expectations** for your child's abilities.

The following series of "**Child Development**" serve to show a general progression through the developmental stages. Every child is unique. It is perfectly normal for a child to attain some milestones earlier and others later than the general trend.

Don't be over alarmed if your baby takes a slightly different timing or fails to attain certain abilities at some stage. It may only signal a need for more attention.



**If you have any concerns related to your child's development, discuss with the nurses or doctors at any MCHC or your family doctor/ paediatrician.**



Family Health Service

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