



Early child care

by Dr Patrice Engle

People working to improve child health often focus on medical health, such as preventing and treating common childhood illnesses, and encouraging good nutrition. Physical health is very important, but a child's mental, social and spiritual needs must also be met to ensure the full and healthy development of that child. Babies and young children need special attention because the care and attention a child receives in the first five years of life will influence a child's whole development. People are capable of learning throughout life, but brain development is most rapid during the first few months and years.

The importance of care

Parents and other caregivers take care of children every day, but often do not realise how much they are doing, and how important it is. A child's growth and development depend on the availability and quality of four things:

- healthcare services
- a healthy home environment
- emotional care
- healthy nutrition.

In difficult situations, where access to resources such as food or treatment is limited, good care at home is even

more important to ensure the child's survival, growth and development. Access to medical services at a local health centre is important, but what happens in the home is what really makes a difference. A health worker gives advice or a prescription, but it is the caregiver who has to obtain the necessary medicine and give it to the child each day, as well as take the child for immunisations. In the home, caregivers are responsible for creating a healthy environment by preventing accidents and teaching the child about hygiene and sanitation, such as handwashing and using a latrine. Caring for the child includes preparing and storing nutritional food, ensuring he or she receives education, and giving love and affection to the child. Children should be valued as people in their own right.

Emotional care and stimulation

About half of a child's mental abilities will depend on the quality and consistency of social and emotional care, and opportunities for learning,



Photo Marcus Perkins Tearfund

The care and attention a child receives in the first five years of life will influence their whole development.

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Footsteps is a quarterly paper, linking health and development workers worldwide. Tearfund, publisher of Footsteps, hopes that it will provide the stimulus of new ideas and enthusiasm. It is a way of encouraging Christians of all nations as they work together towards creating wholeness in our communities.

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Readers are invited to contribute views, articles, letters and photos.

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Activities to stimulate a child's development

Age	Play	Communication
Under six months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ways for a child to hear, feel, see, touch and move • Have large colourful things for a child to reach for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at your child's eyes and smile at him or her • Talk and sing to your child and have a conversation with sounds and actions
Six months to two years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child things to stack up, to put into containers and to take out. Make sure these are big enough to prevent the child choking on them • Play simple games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your child the names of people and things • Ask your child simple questions
Two to three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make simple toys for your child • Teach your child stories, songs and games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your child to talk and answer your child's questions • Help your child to count, name things and compare things

that the child receives, especially in the first five years of life. Good care means:

- giving children love, affection and attention. Caregivers should hold, touch, talk to and comfort children
- protecting children from abuse, neglect and exposure to violence
- encouraging children to play, explore and learn
- responding to a child's emerging abilities by encouraging new skills and stimulating the child by talking and playing with him or her.

This type of care does not require any resources apart from time. Good care and stimulation for pre-school children will improve their intelligence. The most important thing that a caregiver can do for a young child is to respond to what the child is trying to do – to follow the child's lead. This means that

Good care and stimulation for pre-school children will improve their intelligence

the caregiver has to pay attention to what the child is learning to do, and help the child to take the next step. For example, if a child is beginning to make sounds, the caregiver can imitate the sounds and add some new ones. It is important to encourage all the child's attempts, and praise the child for what he or she manages to do, not to criticise.

Healthy nutrition

Good nutrition is very important for child health, particularly in the early years. A child's nutrition during the first five years of life will have a significant effect on the child's mental and physical development. Improving the mother's nutrition during the pregnancy is very important as development begins in the womb. Children who are born with low birth weight or who are malnourished are likely to develop more slowly, and perform less well at school because they are less able to learn and pay attention. If children are healthy and well-nourished, they are better able to learn and have the energy and curiosity to explore and respond to their environment.

Breastfeeding Breast milk is the perfect food for babies, since it contains all the nutrients needed for healthy

Healthy and well-nourished children are better able to learn

development of the brain. Mothers living with HIV have a difficult decision to make as HIV can be transmitted through breast milk. But the nutritional benefits of breast milk are so great, that in resource-poor settings, where access to safe water and sufficient breast milk substitutes cannot be guaranteed, it is recommended that mothers breastfeed exclusively for the first six months. Make sure that during this time the baby receives no other foods or liquids, such as tea or water. After six months stop breastfeeding as quickly as possible (*Footsteps 52*).

Encouraging a child to eat Good feeding practices can stimulate learning and help to make sure a child gets enough to eat. Poor appetite is common and may be caused by illness or mouth infections, food that does not taste good, or the child being upset or unhappy. Here are some practical suggestions:

- Feed the child when he or she shows signs of being hungry, rather than waiting for the child to start crying.
- Feed the child at the same times each day, if possible.

- Seat the child, give him or her your attention and try not to have any distractions during meal times.
- Wash your hands before feeding a child. Give small amounts of food at a time – use your fingers or a small spoon or utensil that provides small mouthfuls.
- Talk to the child during the meal – describe the food, the situation, the people around, and say how well the child is eating. Even if the child cannot answer, he or she is learning names and meanings of things.
- Allow the child to eat in company with others, but make sure that the child has his or her own separate plate.
- Eat the same food yourself and show that you like the food.
- Encourage the child to try to feed him or herself, as this will develop their confidence and movement skills. Children under two years old can often manage a few mouthfuls using a spoon, but may also need to be fed. Children learn through their hands and senses, so allow the child to pick up food with their fingers, even if they may make a mess.
- Offer a few more mouthfuls when the child has stopped eating, but do not force the child to eat – make mealtimes happy and peaceful.

Care for caregivers

Caregivers also need support and encouragement, especially if they are children themselves. Caregivers cannot give adequate care unless they have enough time, knowledge, motivation and control of resources such as money. Support from family members, particularly men, can make a big difference. Communities can also help by providing safe places for children to play, or alternative care.

It is very important that girls have the same access to nutrition and education as boys. This will also have a positive impact on the next generation, as women are usually the primary caregivers for children.

The information in this article is adapted with permission from articles which appeared in Child Health Dialogue, issue 20. (<http://www.healthlink.org.uk/PDFs/chd20.pdf>)

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Photo Richard Hanson Tearfund

Good nutrition is very important for child health.

> Developmental milestones for most children

Age	Milestone
Three months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiggle and kick with legs and arms • Smile • Make cooing sounds
One year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crawl on hands and knees • Sit without support • Get up to standing position with support • Say two or three words • Follow simple instructions • Pick things up with thumb and one finger
Two years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry an object while walking • Feed himself or herself • Repeat words that others say • Use two- or three-word sentences

Marriage

By Lyn Lusi

Recently, HEAL Africa did a survey of attitudes and behaviour around gender issues in Pangi, Maniema province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. One man told the researcher: 'I have a happy marriage. I have a peaceful, happy home. My children are well fed and go to school every morning with clean clothes. My wife is my partner in everything I do and she is my biggest supporter.' But his wife told the same researcher: 'My husband is always angry and sometimes violent to me. I have no say in decisions. What I earn is not my own. I would never dare to say no to sex.'



A good marriage should be a partnership where both husband and wife value and respect each other.

Photo: Marcus Perkins Tearfund

Many marriages are like this: the husband thinks it is a good marriage, but the wife is miserable. How can there be so much misunderstanding? A marriage that is good for only one person is not a real marriage. A successful relationship must be mutual, and bring benefit to both partners. Both husband and wife can invest in a happy marriage where their needs are met and their individual personalities are respected. In a good marriage, the relationship grows stronger over the years.

Early marriage

Here in Maniema province, many families negotiate a marriage for their daughters when they are only 12 or 13 years old. This is illegal, but in practice child marriage continues. This means that young girls can be mothers at 14, before their bodies are fully developed. As a result, labour is often long and difficult, and the baby can get stuck in the birth canal and eventually die. Blocked labour can lead to a condition called fistula, where the woman's body

is badly damaged, causing her to leak urine or faeces. This often means they are abandoned by their husbands and become social outcasts.

Obstetric fistulas can be repaired by surgery. Since 2003, HEAL Africa has carried out over 1,000 surgeries, transforming women's lives so that they can return to their families. While recovering from surgery, women receive counselling, training in family mediation, and the opportunity to learn new skills, such as literacy, sewing, crafts. This means they return to their communities with new knowledge and experience. This gives them confidence and restores self-worth. They have been part of a community and have experienced love and hope, which they bring back home with them.

The role of the church

The church has a powerful voice in many communities and should speak out to highlight harmful traditions and change attitudes. Church leaders, both men and women, can be very effective in encouraging good family relationships. They can help men to view their wives as human beings and as partners, not just as their 'property'. In eastern Congo, local churches working together have really helped raise awareness in the fight against all forms of sexual violence. We are seeing

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss what you expect in a 'perfect' marriage. It may be helpful for men and women to discuss this separately first and then come together to share their conclusions. What are the differences between what men and women expect in marriage?
- Do you know of any couples whose marriage relationship you admire? What is different about their relationship? Can you gain advice and learn from them?
- What does the Bible say about marriage? Study these passages: 1 Corinthians 7:1-5, Ephesians 5:21-33 and Genesis 1:27-2:25.
- If a couple can't have children, how does it affect their marriage, or their status in the community? If they do have children, does the sex of the children matter? What is God's perspective?
- Do we give each other enough time as a couple – to relax together, to enjoy each other's company, to read and pray together? How could we make more time for this?
- When people in our community are having problems with their marriage, who can they turn to for wise support and advice?
- Does our church provide support and help for married couples and for couples preparing for marriage? Would this be helpful? If so, how could this be done?

signs of change. Women counsellors chosen by churches are reaching out to women who have suffered rape. When they speak out against domestic violence and abuse of women, they now speak with the backing of the churches. They tell the community to catch the rapist and make him ashamed, but to surround the woman with love.

Recently a man from a remote area brought his wife to our hospital for treatment after rape. He cared for his wife throughout her treatment, and he also learned to read and write alongside her, and learned to sew. They went home with a sewing machine to start a business together. This is a true partnership and an encouraging sign of changing attitudes.

Partnership

Sexual violence is not just a result of war. Social attitudes and gender inequalities also play a role. Domestic violence is a widespread problem in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Can there be real partnership without

equality? If a man wants his marriage to be a partnership, then he should not use his superior strength or use violence to force his wife into submission. Can any woman truly love a man who beats her? Where there is violence, there is fear, not love. Men and women are different. A partnership gives value to what both people bring to the relationship. It can take a lot of talking and listening and patient effort to understand what each person wants and needs in a marriage. Are we able to talk freely about our marriage? Do we know how to listen to each other? The church in Africa has the responsibility to show what God intended for marriage, so that both the husband and wife can tell the researcher honestly, 'We have a truly happy marriage!'

Lyn Lusi works for HEAL Africa in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, as Programme Manager. She has expanded the Learning Centre Hospital's programme to include family planning, safe motherhood, women against violence, AIDS education and homecare, and community rehabilitation.

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> Sexual violence

There has been conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo for over ten years. During this time, the military have often deliberately attacked family life. Hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped. When women go to the field to grow food for their families, or into the forest to collect firewood, they are vulnerable to attack.

HEAL Africa (Health, Education, community Action, and Leadership development) has an outreach programme to victims of rape, offering counselling and treatment. Specialists go to rural clinics to train local doctors in how to care for women who have been raped. A nurse delivers medicines and post-rape treatment kits. In remote areas, village women are trained to become counsellors who can refer women victims of sexual violence for treatment. Serious cases come back to Goma for operations. It is not just a question of providing medical treatment – people who have been raped need emotional healing too.



Social attitudes

One of the most difficult issues is tackling social attitudes. If it is known that a woman has been raped, even though it is not her fault, she is made to feel ashamed. Often her husband will reject her. She is considered to be defiled, and no longer worthy to live in the family home. Through this undesired stigma she bears not only the pain of the attack, but also the double pain of humiliation and rejection. There needs to be more recognition that rape is always a crime, and that women who are raped are not guilty, and need help and support.



Editorial

This issue of *Footsteps* focuses on the family. It looks at issues such as marriage, child health, discipline and care for children, and shares practical ideas on playing with babies and young children.

In many communities across the world, war, displacement and the impact of the AIDS pandemic have resulted in increasing numbers of orphans and child-headed households. Churches and communities are facing up to this challenge as traditional family systems break down. One positive approach is child-to-child initiatives (page 6) that mobilise young people to help provide care and support for orphans and vulnerable children in their community.

I am sad to announce that Isabel Carter, who has edited *Footsteps* since 1988, is leaving Tearfund to concentrate on climate change work. Isabel has been a real inspiration for me, and it has been a privilege to work with her on *Footsteps* over the last few years. I would like to thank her on behalf of *Footsteps* readers, the editorial committee and Tearfund for all her hard work. Her energy, commitment and passion for sharing information in a practical and accessible way will be greatly missed.

Future issues will look at water and sanitation, family health and innovation.

Remember to keep sending in your entries for the competition launched in *Footsteps* 71. The challenge is to write an article sharing information about a new idea from your own work. The deadline for entries is 31 January 2008 and the winning articles will be published in *Footsteps* 75.

Maggie Sandilands,
Sub Editor

Big brothers and sisters

by Philippa Miner



Photo: BBSC

Big Brothers and Sisters of Cambodia (BBSC) began as part of a community-based project to support the hundreds of children orphaned by AIDS in poor urban areas of Cambodia. A group of ten Christian young people were recruited as youth mentors for these children. Their enthusiasm quickly spread. Soon many other youth were asking how they could be involved.

BBSC now provides a simple but powerful way for Christian youth in Cambodia to put their faith into action by becoming a 'big brother' or 'big sister' to an orphan or child at risk in their own community. The big brothers and sisters commit to visit their little brothers and sisters on a weekly basis. Orphans receive a friend who will pay attention to them, notice when they are struggling and encourage them in their achievements.

Working through the local church

BBSC works with the youth department of the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia (EFC). This gives BBSC a profile within Cambodian churches and helps make contact with local Christian leaders. BBSC visits youth leaders' camps, seminars and training

sessions for pastors or youth leaders, to talk about the needs of children who have lost their parents to AIDS. Pastors and youth leaders help to promote the vision in local churches and youth clubs as well as to check the suitability of potential new volunteers.

Big brothers and sisters form themselves into groups of between five and ten young people, so that they will have support and encouragement from their peers. Each big brother is then matched up with one little brother and each big sister is matched up with one little sister from their local community. The orphans are not related to their big brothers or sisters. It is important that brothers and sisters live in the same area to enable regular visits. During the weekly visit, the big brother or sister simply spends time with the orphan – encouraging, listening,

talking, playing, praying, eating and having fun.

Sustainability

The big brothers and sisters are not given any financial support by BBSC. Instead they share what they have with their little brothers and sisters. In this way the community is not dependent on outside help, but is helping itself. It sounds difficult to expect young people from poor communities to give to others, when they may be struggling to be able to afford the basics themselves. Yet even without money, these young people still have legs to go and visit, ears to listen, mouths to give encouragement and hands to reach out in love. Little things can make a big difference. One young volunteer told us how happy she felt being able to give some of her clothes to the orphan who has become her little sister. Previously, her little sister had to wash her single school uniform and wait until it was dry before putting it on again.

BBSC is a movement of volunteers that is learning there are many ways to challenge, mobilise and inspire people without using financial incentives. For example, BBSC regularly provides training, encouragement and advice to the groups of big brothers and sisters. BBSC sends out a newsletter several times a year containing news, photos and ideas. T-shirts, certificates, photos and other small items give volunteers a sense of identity and achievement. The groups of big brothers and sisters also meet regularly to support each other, pray for their orphans and have fun outings together. There are now groups in four different provinces, and 120 big brothers and sisters visiting 120 children each week. The word is spreading ...

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Snail farming

At the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Endogenous Development (CIKED) we have been training people about snail farming. This is to protect wild snails as well as to meet the ever increasing demand for snail meat.

Our snail projects have witnessed a lot of setbacks from ants which attack and kill the snails. We would like some advice from farmers and experts with knowledge of snail farming elsewhere in the world, on how to deal with the ants. We would also appreciate any information related to this activity and other agro-pastoral activities.

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The danger of re-using plastic

Plastic rubbish contains toxic substances which can damage soil fertility. To reduce this environmental damage, you can reduce the amount of plastic products produced, reuse them, or recycle them (*Footsteps* 59). In Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, women and children collect rubbish such as plastic bags and other plastics that have been thrown away. They collect these, not only to protect the

fertility of their vegetable gardens, but also to use in their homes.

The plastic bags are used for lighting fires and as fuel for ovens. During this process, smoke and a nasty smell are produced. In spite of that, this way of feeding a fire is becoming increasingly popular. I would like to know if this way of re-using bags and other plastic products threatens people's health. If so, are we saving the vegetable gardens at the cost of damaging people's health?

[*EDITOR'S NOTE: burning plastics is damaging to health and should not be recommended.*]

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Siphoning fuel

I would like to respond to the question about a mouth filter for use when siphoning fuel (*Footsteps* 70). First, make sure the full container is higher than the receiving one. Then submerge the piece of hose being used to conduct the fuel completely in the fuel in the upper container, ensuring that it contains all fuel and no air. Then use your thumb to block the end which will go into the receiving container, and keep it blocked as you lead it down

into the receiving container. Once it is in the receiving container, let go, and then the fuel will flow. No mouth contact is necessary. Good siphoning!

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Photo: Mike Webb Tearfund

Equal roles?

African women work very hard but their work rarely earns attention or appreciation. They give birth to many children, work hard on the farms to feed all those mouths, walk long distances to look for firewood and water to prepare food, do all the cleaning, and stay awake all night when a child falls sick. Many also have to endure constant insults and beatings from unappreciative husbands.

A debate on gender equality is much needed, and not only in Africa. But many have mistaken the call for equality as a sign for a war between the genders. Marriage calls for responsibility, cooperation, support and above all love from both husband and wife, it should not be a struggle for power and control. Fair division of household labour should create harmony, and give a sense of pride and belonging to every member of the family.

The solution cannot be left only to the UN and other international organisations, but should come from all men and women, married and single, young and old alike.

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Health care Information For All by 2015 (HIFA2015)

Tens of thousands of people die every day in developing countries from common illnesses that can be treated easily. The vast majority die at home or under the care of a primary health worker. A major factor in these deaths is that the parent, carer, or health worker very often does not know what to do and when to seek help. In other words, people are dying for lack of basic health care knowledge.

HIFA2015 is a global campaign that brings together more than 800 professionals from 92 countries around a common goal: 'By 2015, every person worldwide will have access to an informed health care provider'. To achieve this goal, we need to give a voice to community health workers, to ensure their needs are heard by those in positions of influence.

We would like to invite ideas and suggestions from *Footsteps* readers on how we can do this. We also invite you to join the HIFA2015 email community and take part in our ongoing discussions. For further details, please see www.hifa2015.org or contact HIFA2015-admin@dgroups.org

Playing with babies and young children

Children play because it is fun, but play is also key to their learning and development. Play helps them to learn new skills, communicate, gain confidence, relate to other people and find out about themselves and the world. All children – both girls and boys – need the same opportunities for play and interaction with family members and friends. Listening to and responding to young children is one of the most important things that adults and older children can do. When we do this well, children learn that what they say and do is important. This makes them feel good about themselves and gives them the confidence to try new things.

Every child is different and develops at a different rate. Babies who have not had enough to eat or have been ill need extra help. Children with disabilities should not be excluded. They may need extra support and encouragement to overcome difficulties in moving or hearing or seeing. They may not do all of the things that other babies and young children do at a similar age but they will learn to do many things, if they are given appropriate support and stimulation.

Older children usually like to play with and help babies and younger children. They can help younger children to develop by being there to play with them, to listen to them and to support them when they try out new activities, and to make sure they are safe. Older children can help to make everyday activities – going to the market, preparing food – fun and interesting for young children.

Remember: it is important that older children are not overburdened with



Photo Richard Hanson Tearfund

Young children need to be very active.

adult responsibilities for caring for babies and younger children. Older children also need time for play and their own development must not be neglected.

Activities for babies

Babies need to be stimulated and responded to from the time they are born. This can be done through play, sharing activities and talking, laughing and singing together. If a baby makes a sound or gesture, older children can repeat these back to the baby. This is how babies learn to communicate. Warm and loving relationships are vital to a child's physical, social and emotional development. Holding, cuddling, smiling at and talking to the baby helps him or her to grow and feel secure. Here are some suggestions for play activities that caregivers or older children could use to play with babies up to about two years old.

- Tie or hang objects like spoons close to where the baby lies so that he or she can reach and hold on to them.
- Say the baby's name or clap hands so that the baby will look to see where the sound comes from.



Photo Jim Loring Tearfund

Older children can help with young children, but they also need to go to school and to have time for play.

- Sing to her and rock and move the baby about to the rhythm of a song.
- Carry her about and tell her the names of objects. Even if a baby does not respond at first to this kind of stimulation it is important to continue talking and singing to her.
- As soon as the baby begins to understand and use language they like to play games using words: 'Where's my nose?' or 'Find the cup'.
- Give her smooth objects and encourage her to give them back and to pass them from one hand to another. Make sure the objects are big enough to prevent choking.
- Play games with the baby's fingers and toes.
- Encourage her to clap her hands and wave 'Good-bye'.
- Make her a soft ball to throw.
- Give her two objects and hold on to two more. Bang the objects together and see if the baby can copy it.
- Give her a box and things of different sizes to put in and take out.
- Hide something under a cup or piece of cloth as she watches and see if she can find it.
- Make a doll out of old cloth, filled with bits of cloth or plastic packing materials, dry grass or paper. Be sure you sew it up carefully. Tell the baby stories about the doll.
- Draw in the sand or mud with a stick or a finger and see if the baby can copy it.
- Show the baby an animal or a picture of an animal, make the sound the animal makes and encourage her to repeat the sounds.
- Encourage her to feed herself.

As the baby grows, play games to encourage her to crawl, stand and walk. Make a toy on wheels that a toddler can pull or push as she walks. You can make a roll-along toy with a round tin and wire from a coat hanger. You can thread together cotton reels or old film cases filled with things that rattle for the toddler to pull along. Plastic bottles or soft drink tins also roll well. Make sure there are no sharp surfaces.

If the baby cannot move without help because of a disability, two children can support her to crawl with a band of cloth around her waist and use this to lift her onto her hands and knees. Another child can encourage her to crawl by holding out a toy or some fruit. Remember to show the baby that you are pleased when she tries to do and say new things. Praise her with words and by smiling, patting or hugging her.

Activities for young children

Water, sand and mud Children will play for hours with water and sand, especially if they have a few materials like different sized plastic bottles, tins or gourds to make the play more interesting. Holes can be put in these containers. Thin bamboo, banana stems or hollow reeds make good pipes. They can be used with soap and water for blowing bubbles. Tins, seed pods and pieces of wood can make boats. Children can experiment to see which things float and which sink.

Using the senses Games can be played with scraps of cloth, shells or stones put into bags for little children to identify by touch. Be sure that they are not too small, sharp or poisonous but are clean and interesting to see and feel. Scraps of soap, onion, flowers or anything else with a strong smell can be wrapped in paper with tiny holes in it. Children can guess what it is by smell. Other things can be put into tins to identify by sound when the tin is shaken. This could be fun for children who have difficulty in seeing.

Pretend games Children love to pretend that they are mother, father or teacher. Adults or older children could supply them with materials to make these games more interesting, such as things for making a house, preparing food, making dolls, playing at shopping or going to market and dressing-up clothes. Children only need a little help to dress up. Paper, leaves, sticks and bits of cloth can be used to make hats, dresses and other pretend clothes. Make toy houses out of clay or

> Finding play materials

Excellent playthings can be found in the community and made with materials that cost nothing. Children are very good at finding playthings and thinking of new ways to play with them.

- **At home:** sand, gourds, tins, boxes, pots and lids.
- **From shops:** scraps of cloth, packing material, plastic bottles, bottle tops, cartons and paper.
- **In the community:** water, sand, stones, clay, sticks and seed pods.
- **From local craftsmen and women:** scraps of cloth, wood, metal and leather.
- **From local musicians:** materials and advice for making simple musical instruments.
- **From older people:** local traditional stories, songs, dances and games.

Everyday activities, such as helping to prepare food for the family, provide many opportunities for learning about colour, shape and how to sort, match, count and so on. For example, younger children could help select eating utensils or sort vegetables for cooking. Teachers or caregivers can help older children use scraps of cloth, paper, wood and other material to make mobiles, rattles and soft toys for babies, puzzles, hoops and rollers for toddlers, and picture books and word and counting games for older children.

Elastic bands tied together make a good skipping rope.

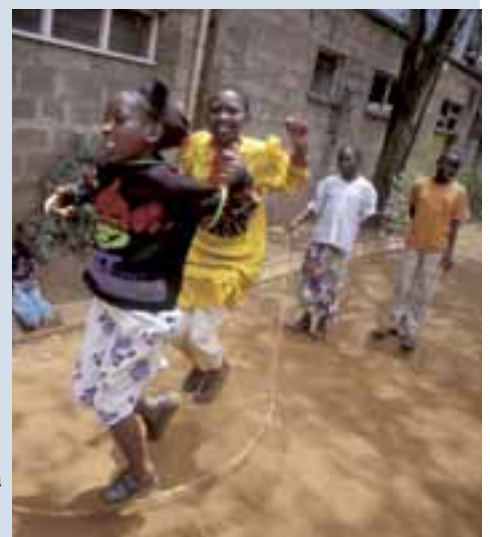


Photo Jim Loring Tearfund

cardboard boxes. Make people out of straw or clay. Put clothes on them. If the pieces can be moved around they will be more fun to play with.

Drawing and painting Most children love to draw and paint. Scrap paper, cardboard and newspapers can be used to paint and draw on. Glue can be made from flour and a little water. Older children could make a book from an old box or bits of cardboard, using their own pictures, family photos or cut-out pictures, and encourage younger children to name what they see.



Photo Jim Loring Tearfund

Talking and listening Listening to children is one of the most important things that we can do to help their development. Older children can collect stories, songs and riddles for younger children. Grandparents often know good stories. Find opportunities to encourage younger children to talk for themselves. Younger children will grow in confidence if they are listened to and their ideas are valued. It is important to try to answer their many questions.

Active play Young children need to be very active. They like to run around and play chasing games. Older children can help them to run and jump, throw and catch, skip, climb and slide. When younger children can throw a little, older children can make or find things for them to aim at. They can learn to throw things into a box or knock down a can or stick. Fallen trees and steep banks are good places for older children to climb and slide down. Simple swings can be made with rope and old tyres, which are also good to roll and climb through. A child with difficulties in moving will enjoy the experience of being in a swing or hammock. Children could get help to make a cart with wheels to ensure that

> Safety in play

Older children and caregivers should make sure that play materials for young children are safe. Avoid:

- Things with sharp edges.
- Small pieces that young children could swallow or put in their noses or ears.
- Plastic bags that can suffocate little children.
- Lead paint.

When young children play out of doors it is important to check that places where they run and climb are safe and that they do not risk running into a road or falling into wells or pits.

children who cannot walk because of a disability can explore with other children.

Article compiled by Maggie Sandilands using information from Early Years – Children Promote Health: Case Studies on Child-to-Child and Early Childhood Development, published by The Child-to-Child Trust. See Resources page for details on how to order.

www.child-to-child.org/publications

Farewell from Isabel

In 1988 I was first asked by Tearfund to spend a few hours a week editing the newsletter *Footsteps to Health*. At the time it had a distribution of about 1,000 English readers. Now, nearly 20 years later, *Footsteps* is widely known around the world with a distribution of 48,000 printed issues in seven language versions. We had a further 113,000 people downloading issues from the tilz website last year and over 615,000 hits from both tilz and the Chinese web version. We now also have a new electronic version to distribute as well.

The interaction with *Footsteps* readers over the years has been of huge personal significance. I am always thrilled by news of readers who have

taken information from articles and put this into practice to improve either their own or other people's situations. The way in which readers use such information challenged me to carry out research into effective communication which led to the PILLARS process of sharing information through participatory group discussion.

I am leaving Tearfund to concentrate on raising awareness of climate change and the need to change our lifestyles in order to protect the future of our precious but fragile world.

A big thanks to all readers for your interest and support over the years. Also special thanks to our committee members, translators, designers,



illustrator, printers and all the staff at Tearfund who have worked with me on producing *Footsteps* and made it such an enjoyable time. *Footsteps* will continue in the safe hands of our sub editors Rachel and Maggie.

Isabel

tilz website www.tearfund.org/tilz

Tearfund's international publications can be downloaded free of charge from our website. Search for any topic to help in your work.



PILLARS Training DVD

PILLARS encourages groups of all kinds to own their own development through discussion-based learning. PILLARS Guides provide a range of information topics to help people to implement change in their communities.



This training DVD contains seven sections, 3 to 13 minutes long. Each section should be used separately so that people have time to try out the ideas. The sections include:

- The PILLARS vision.
- Making the PILLARS process work for you.
- Facilitation skills.
- Translation.
- Writing new Guides.

The DVD costs £15 to organisations in the North and one copy is available free of charge to organisations in the South. Please email:

roots@tearfund.org

or write to:

Resources Development
Tearfund
100 Church Road
Teddington
TW11 8QE

Setting up Community Health Programmes

An updated edition of this practical manual on how to set up or strengthen community-based health care in rural or urban areas. It includes community-based approaches to treatment as well as care and prevention of HIV. This is a key resource for anyone involved in primary health care including doctors, nurses and care workers of all levels.



The book costs £5.50 (plus P&P) for those working in the South, and can be ordered from Interhealth. Please email:

supplies@interhealth.org.uk

The River of Hope

The River of Hope is a resource manual written for people working with children and young people (aged 8–18) in communities affected by HIV. It is aimed at programme managers who support, guide and train community-based facilitators and teachers.

The manual provides ideas, experiences and practical activities that will encourage children and young people to help each other understand and cope with the impact of HIV.

The manual costs £7.50 and can be ordered from the website

www.healthlink.org.uk

For more information please contact:

Healthlink Worldwide
56–64 Leonard Street
London
EC2A 4JX
UK

Email: info@healthlink.org.uk

E-Footsteps

Electronic versions of *Footsteps* are now available by regular email. Readers must have good web access to benefit from this. To subscribe, please email:

footsteps@tearfund.org

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.child-to-child.org

Child-to-Child is an international network promoting children's participation in health and development. The Child-to-Child Approach is an educational process that links children's learning with taking action to promote the health, wellbeing and development of children, their families and their communities. This website features a wide range of information, resources and online publications. Publications are free to download in English and Portuguese, or can be ordered online. For more information contact:

Child-to-Child Trust
20 Bedford Way
London, WC1H 0AL

Email: ccenquiries@ioe.ac.uk

www.asksource.info/res_library/ecd.htm

This website contains lots of useful information on early childhood development and links to organisations and resources for working with children aged 0–8 years in developing countries, on topics such as child rights, education, HIV and building community capacity to care for children.

www.crin.org

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) is a global network that shares information about child rights. This website contains links to hundreds of publications and details of organisations working worldwide for children. Themes covered include child labour and HIV.

www.apc.org/english/capacity/training/trainers.shtml

This website for the Association for Progressive Communications contains many useful tools and training resources for development. The materials are available in different languages and most are free to download.

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/international_programme

The International programme of HDRA (Henry Doubleday Research Association) offers a free information and advice service for small farmers and community-based organisations on any aspect of organic agriculture for developing countries. It has developed simple booklets and information sheets on a range of issues from composting and weed control to multipurpose trees. There is also a free enquiry service for answering specific questions on organic farming.

The role of the father

by Rev Joe Kapolyo

Many people think that looking after children is primarily a 'woman's role'. The subject of fatherhood is often neglected. Both parents should be actively involved in bringing up their children. The role of a father is very important to me. I am a 54 year old man from Zambia. I have been in full-time Christian work for the last 31 years in Zambia, Zimbabwe and the UK, and currently work as a church minister in north London. My wife and I have been married for 25 years and we have two grown-up daughters.

Good role models

My role model as a father was my own biological father. He taught me many things, mostly by example. Through his relationship with my mother, my father showed me that a good father loves, respects, honours, provides and cares for the mother of his children. He taught me to respect other people, both neighbours and strangers, and to be kind to them. My father took his responsibilities seriously. He worked hard to provide for his immediate family and at times his extended family. We did not have much but we were not hungry, naked or homeless. My father made no distinction between his seven sons and five daughters. We

were all treated exactly the same. Our father made sure that all twelve of us received education.

It was from my father that I learnt that the jobs I take on do not make me the man I am. Rather, he taught me that the man I am will affect the manner in which I do every job. Because of that lesson I have never considered any job beneath me. I have enjoyed and still enjoy housework, including taking care of the children, cleaning the house, shopping for food, cooking, washing up, laundry and ironing.

Harmful role models

Cultural definitions and expectations of fatherhood vary. Sadly, there are

many poor models of fatherhood in the world. For instance, there are those for whom fatherhood begins and ends with sex. They take no further responsibility for caring for their partner during pregnancy. They certainly do not consider it their duty, let alone a joy and privilege, to bring up their children. There are so many single mothers who have to bear a heavy and unfair burden in bringing up children alone.

While some fathers neglect their children, others actually abuse them. This could be mental or emotional abuse, such as withholding affection or constantly criticising the child. Some hurt their children physically, or abuse them sexually. These men are failing in the role of a father and inflict terrible damage on the child. Communities and families should take responsibility to ensure that caregivers do not abuse children.

Fatherhood

It is a real privilege to be a father. Some of us become fathers biologically; many others take on the role of a father through different circumstances, such as through caring for orphans. However one comes to fatherhood, it is important to take the role seriously and to focus on the needs (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) of the child. Fathers need to invest time and effort to care for their children and help prepare them to face the challenges of the future. When the children are young, a good father will

Communities and families should take responsibility to ensure that caregivers do not abuse children



Photo Geoff Crawford Tearfund

Fathers and mothers both need to take an active role in bringing up their children.



Photo Marcus Perkins Tearfund

Many grandparents act as caregivers for their grandchildren.

take every opportunity to look after, comfort, pray for and provide for his children. He will seek to bond with them in a relationship of love and care. It is not just a question of providing physically or financially for his children. Fathers have a role to play in creating a good, warm, safe and friendly home environment in which to bring up the children, in disciplining them and in teaching them about culture and values. A father should help his children to learn to choose what is right, to respect all other human beings and to prepare in turn to be good parents themselves to the next generation.

Rev Joe M Kapolyo is a minister at Edmonton Baptist Church in London. He has previously worked as a Scripture Union Travelling Secretary in Zambia, a Baptist Minister in both Zambia and Zimbabwe, and a theological educator in Zambia, Zimbabwe and the UK. He was principal of the Theological College of Central Africa in Zambia and subsequently principal of All Nations Christians College in the UK.

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Bible study

Fatherhood

by Rev Joe Kapolyo

In the Bible God is often referred to as Father. He is the father of Jesus Christ in a very personal and unique way. But Jesus taught us all to call God our father.

Read Matthew 6:5-15

God is a father to us in both the natural and spiritual sense. All human beings are God's children, as he created us all in his image (Genesis 1:27). But

Christians are children of God in another sense, because we have chosen to become part of his family through accepting the salvation he has offered us in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:11-17). As our father, God not only created us, but he loves us, continues to provide for us and forgives us our sins (Matthew 5:48). God also disciplines us (Hebrews 12:5-11). The picture of God as our father gives us some hints for what human fatherhood should be like.

Think of the man (or men) who have played the role of father in your life. Think about what you have learnt from your father. Consider the good qualities you admire about him. What does it show you about God's attitude to his children? There are some people who have never known their biological father, or who have had a negative experience of a father. Sometimes this can make it difficult to relate to the idea of God as a father. If you are in such a situation think of other men (stepfathers, older brothers, friends of the family, grandfathers, youth leaders and church ministers) who have been a constant, supportive and positive influence in your life.

- *What are the qualities of fatherhood evident in God? How can we model these to the children we care for?*
- *Is it necessary to be a biological father, in order to take on the role of a father? Are there any children or young people in our community who lack fathers? How can we help them?*
- *What is the role of a father in training a child? What responsibilities does a father have to a child? Do these include spiritual responsibilities? (Consider Genesis 18:19, Deuteronomy 6:6-7.)*
- *Colossians 3:21 says 'Fathers, do not embitter (provoke, irritate) your children, or they become discouraged.' What do you think is meant by this? How can a father create the atmosphere in which a child will flourish into maturity?*

Remember that God is also described in the Bible as like a mother (Isaiah 66:13, Matthew 23:37). These questions could also be considered for the role of a mother, and apply to anyone who is caregiver to a child.



Photo Pretzel

Disciplining children

by Mandy Marshall

Talking to a parent or caregiver about appropriate discipline can be difficult. Attitudes to disciplining children may vary in different cultures, and usually parents are acting out of love and care for the child. However, some forms of discipline may harm a child's development.

Positive discipline

Discipline is a part of love. Positive boundaries allow children to develop, grow and reach their full potential safely. This provides a firm foundation for the future of the family and community. Children are naturally curious and like to explore. We need to have patience, explain things, answer their questions, and provide them with safe spaces to explore both physically and mentally. We need to make clear what the boundaries are, and the consequences of unacceptable behaviour. When children step outside these boundaries then we need to provide a calm, positive response.



Photo Marcus Perkins Tearfund

All children need love, affection and encouragement to develop fully.

If we just get angry or shout it can discourage children from exploring at all, which will prevent their full development. Removing a privilege (such as a toy or time with friends) from them for a period of time is an effective way to communicate the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Remember that sometimes a child may be reacting out of fear or grief. They may really need someone to listen to them and provide comfort and reassurance, rather than discipline.

The word discipline is related to the word disciple. We are called to

'disciple' our children and show them the way to go so they can grow up to make a positive contribution to the world. Jesus had disciples. How did he teach them? Relationship was key. He spent time with them and displayed positive ways of living. Jesus was their role model. He loved and encouraged his disciples. We need to show love and affection to our children, and to encourage and praise them when they behave well. Jesus was also full of forgiveness. We need to forgive children when they make mistakes and avoid reminding them of their failures. Both mothers and fathers need to play an active and positive role in their child's upbringing. Discipline should be a part of this loving relationship between parent and child, but not the only part.

Valuing children

In many societies, children are not respected or listened to. The Bible shows that Jesus welcomed children. In Mark 10:13 he says 'Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them'. Jesus valued children, not simply as extra labourers in the household, or as a form of support to the parents at the end of their life, but as individuals in their own right, with their own value and relationship with God.

Tearfund's Child Protection Guidelines state that adults should not hit or

> Good discipline

- Verbally encourage and reward positive behaviour.
- Model the behaviour you want to see – children learn by imitating what adults do, not just what adults tell them to do.
- Be clear and consistent – explain what the child has done wrong, the consequences, and the behaviour you want to see in the future.
- Deal with the situation as soon as possible. The child may have forgotten what they had done if it is left for too long.
- If you have warned a child of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour, then act – carry out the discipline that you said you would provide. Don't warn them and then do nothing.
- Let the response be measured and appropriate for the level required. Do not over-react.
- Do not use physical violence.
- Reassure the child that you love them and forgive them. Your discipline is a result of their inappropriate behaviour and does not affect your love for them or their self-worth and value.

Adapted from Celebrating Children, edited by G Miles and J Wright, published by Paternoster Press.

Status of women in India

by Joyce Vaghela

smack children. Discipline should be appropriate to the child's age and understanding, and the level of their misbehaviour. It should not be given in anger. Sometimes parents are reacting to their own fear for the child or anger with themselves for letting the situation occur. We must be careful in our discipline to ensure that we are providing the right role model for the future. Children learn by copying how adults behave. Do we want children to react with violence? Some alternative forms of discipline include:

- Time out – remove the child from the situation and give them a time for reflection without any distraction. (This also provides space for the parents to calm down if they are angry and to decide on an appropriate response.)
- Stop the child from seeing friends for a day.
- Give them an extra chore or job to do that they would not normally perform.
- Remove any privileges (such as a favourite toy) for a set, agreed period of time.

Conclusion

If discipline is to be effective, it is important that it is consistent, appropriate and that the child understands the reason for it. Always take time to explain clearly to the child:

- what behaviour was unacceptable
- why it was unacceptable
- what level of behaviour is required in the future
- what the consequences of their actions will be.

Mandy Marshall is a Programme Development Officer for Tearfund and has trained on child protection issues worldwide.

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Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, said, 'You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women'.

The Beijing Declaration at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) point 13 says, 'Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace'.

There are many examples of how much women can achieve when given the opportunity. In India there are women political leaders, astronauts, athletes and writers, who are role models for young women. But poverty and social inequalities still prevent many women from fulfilling their potential. The principle of gender equality is contained in the Indian Constitution, legal system and government policies. However, there is still a wide gap between these principles and the reality of the status of women in many communities across India. This is shown by low female literacy rates and high maternal mortality rates, particularly in rural areas. Attitudes need to change at the level of the family. Parents need to ensure that girls as well as boys receive health care, education, training, opportunities and access to resources.

The low value that society places on women and girls means they are less likely than men to receive timely medical treatment or adequate nutrition. Unequal access to food, heavy work demands, and special nutritional needs such as for iron, make women and girls more vulnerable to illness, particularly anaemia. Anaemia caused by lack of iron is widespread

among Indian girls and women and affects the majority of pregnant women. Anaemic and malnourished women give birth to malnourished children. [EDITOR'S NOTE Iron can be found in red meat (especially liver), egg yolk, dark green leaves and pulses. Eating fruit rich in vitamin C, such as papaya and oranges, helps the body to absorb iron.]

Many women work twice as many hours as men because they carry out most of the household responsibilities as well as working outside their homes. Their household work is unpaid and unrecognised. Equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women will help improve the status of women in India. If husbands show love and respect to their wives, and parents show they value their daughters equally to their sons, this will provide a good model for the next generation.

Joyce Vaghela works for the Community Health Department, St Stephen's Hospital, Delhi, India.

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Photo Caroline Irby Tearfund

A home for the homeless

by Ieda Maria Siebra Bochio

Casa Filadélfia (CAF) is a Christian organisation in São Paulo, Brazil, that supports children, adolescents and families living with or affected by HIV. CAF projects are designed to reach out to people who are excluded from society, to help restore their self-esteem and equip them with the skills they need for the future.

In CAF's refuge 'Our Home', children and young people living with HIV, many of whom have previously lived on the streets, become part of a new family. They are referred to CAF by local government, hospitals and other refuges. In Our Home their basic physical needs are met, such as food, clothing and accommodation, and they also find social and emotional support. Through this, they begin the process of returning to live within a family. Some return to their original families, while

others are supported by a relative, such as a grandmother or an aunt, or adopted by a support family.

Families from local churches, volunteers and even families that are beneficiaries of other CAF projects, participate as support families. They look after the children during weekends and school holidays. This provides an opportunity for the children to make new friends and to be involved in a family situation again. Many support families decide to become adoptive families.

Returning to a family is not an easy process. It has to be based on love and acceptance. Children and young people living in refuges or on the streets have already experienced the loss of, or separation from, their parents. Many have memories of being neglected



Learning how to prepare a meal together.

and some have known violence and abuse. Often it is hard for them to be open and to trust adults again. Those living with HIV also have to face health problems and deal with the physical and emotional side-effects of strong medication. Patience, understanding and encouragement is needed.

It is important that there is good communication between the children, CAF's team, local authorities and the families involved in the process. The feelings and views of the children should be listened to. The process takes a lot of time and perseverance, and there is much to learn.

Ieda Maria Siebra Bochio is General Coordinator of Casa Filadélfia.

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CASE STUDY

Some children have disabilities or learning problems which make the process more difficult. 'W' is eight years old and arrived from another refuge two years ago. His speech difficulties are partly caused by emotional stress due to the separation from his mother when he was very young and also due to mistreatment at the other refuge. At first, he could not communicate properly, so it was hard for him to make friends and to enjoy games with other children at CAF. He often felt sad and lonely. A family from a local church heard about his situation and invited him to stay with them for a weekend. Even though it was hard for them to understand him, they kept encouraging him, talking to him, and gave him lots of attention. Over time this relationship and support raised 'W's' confidence and self-esteem, which enabled him to socialise better with the other children.

CASE STUDY

Sebastiana is living with HIV. She is 44 years old and has a large family, with 16 people living in the same house. She had no means to earn a living to support her family until she started attending a CAF workshop, where she learned how to sew patchwork. She became very skilled and started selling her products. She also started helping at the workshop, teaching other women what she had already learnt. The children's refuge is in the same building as where the workshops are held, and one day Sebastiana met 'J', a 13 year old boy from Our Home project. She noticed that he

was crying and was very upset, so she started talking to him and they became friends.

Although she is very busy and has a big family to support, she volunteered to become his support family. In her house, 'J' likes to help her in the kitchen and to play with Sebastiana's children. Her house is very simple, and Sebastiana does not have much money, but she cares for 'J' and for his future and is prepared to provide for him, not just food, but love and care, just as she does for her natural children and grandchildren. 'J' now feels he is part of the family.