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Responsive Care and Early Learning Addendum



Counselling Cards

August 2023

Attribution

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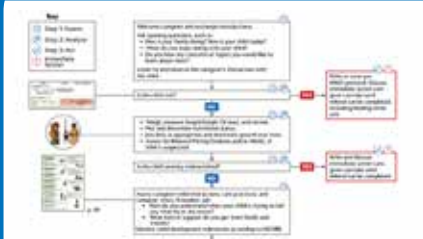
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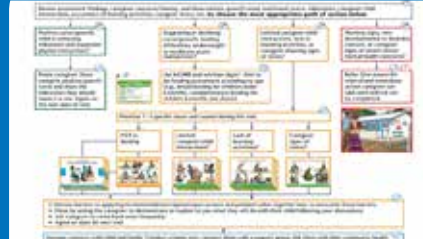
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Job Aid: Individual Counselling



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Job Aid: Group Sessions

A document titled 'Group Session Facilitation Guide' containing a table with columns for 'Session', 'Duration', 'Facilitator', 'Materials', and 'Notes'. It lists various topics and activities for group sessions.

Group Session Facilitation Guide

Card 1: Responsive Care



Your loving care helps your child grow and develop

Card 2: Responsive Feeding



Teach your child to eat with love, patience, and good humour

Card 3: Communication



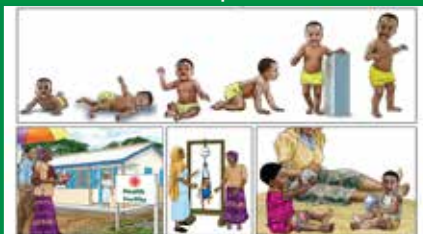
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Give your child daily opportunities to learn through play

Card 5: Monitoring Child Development



Seek help if you are concerned about your child's development

Card 6: Caring for the Caregiver



Take care of yourself in order to care for your child

Special Circumstances Card 7: Feeding Difficulties



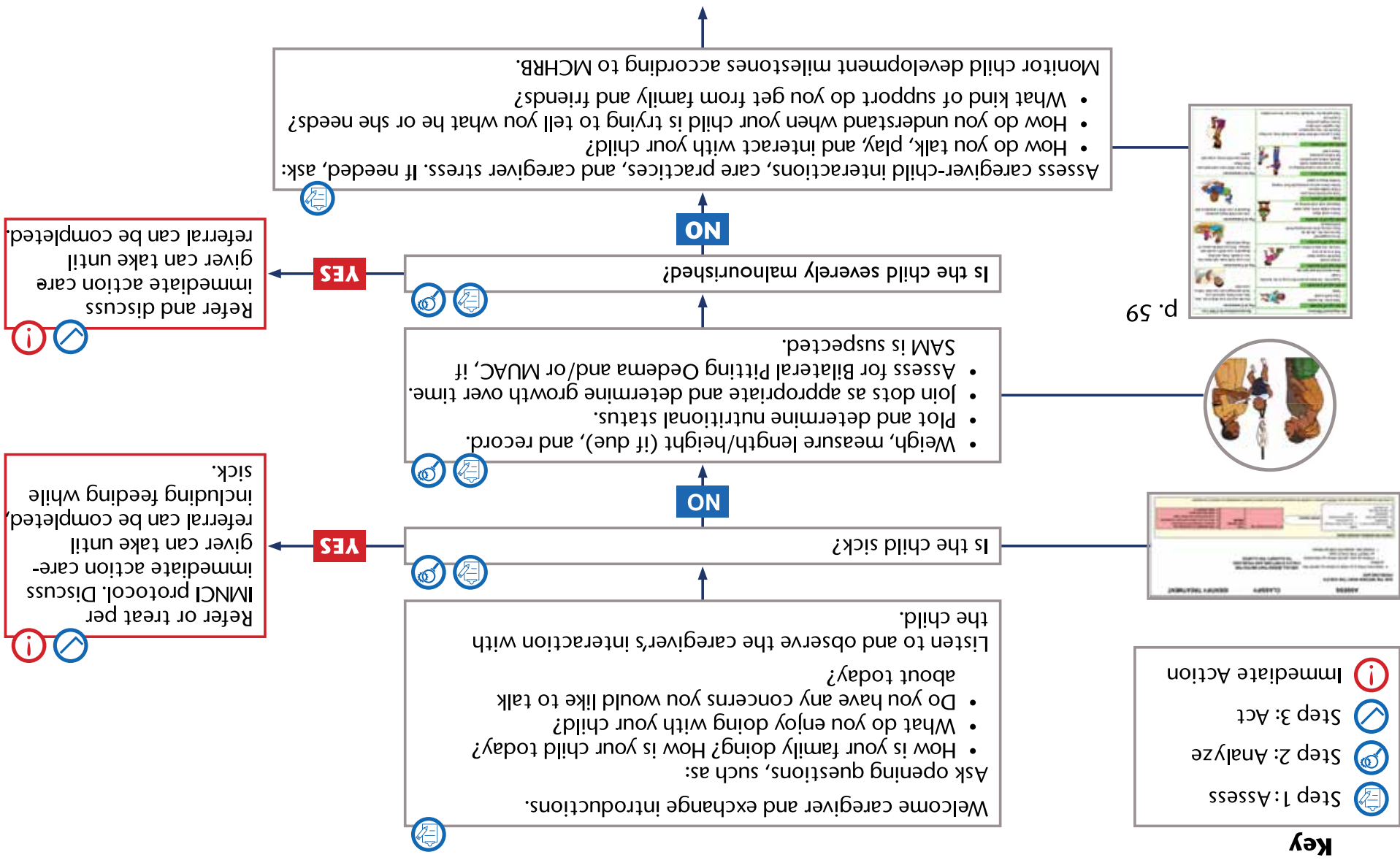
Care and feeding for children with feeding difficulties

Job Aid: Disability Inclusion



Tips for Supporting Children with Disabilities to Engage in Play and Learning

IYCF/RCEL Counselling Flow Chart for Child Welfare Services



Review assessment findings, caregiver concerns/sharing, and observations: growth trend, nutritional status, milestones, caregiver-child interactions, occurrence of learning activities, caregiver stress, **to choose the most appropriate path of action below.**

Positive curve/growth, child is achieving milestones and responsive playful interactions?

Praise caregiver. Show caregiver positive growth curve and share the milestones they should expect to see. Agree on the next date of visit.

Stagnating or declining curve/growth, feeding difficulties, underweight, or moderate acute malnutrition?

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The table is titled 'ALGORITHM FOR NUTRITION COUNSELING (MCHRB) AT EHC'. It contains columns for 'Growth Trend', 'Feeding Status', 'Weight Status', and 'Action'. The rows represent different combinations of these factors, leading to specific counseling actions.

Use MCHRB and nutrition algorithm to do feeding assessment according to age (e.g., breastfeeding for children under 6 months, complementary feeding for children 6 months and above).

Limited caregiver-child interactions, lack of learning activities, or caregiver showing signs of stress?

Warning signs, new developmental or disability concern, or caregiver signs of severe stress/mental health concerns?

Refer. Give reason for referral and immediate action caregiver can take until referral can be completed.

Prioritize 1-2 specific issues and counsel during this visit.

IYCF or feeding difficulties?

Limited caregiver-child interactions?

Lack of learning activities?

Caregiver signs of stress?



- Discuss barriers to applying recommendations/agreed-upon actions and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- Close by asking the caregiver to demonstrate or explain to you what they will do with their child following your discussions.
- Ask caregiver to come back more frequently.
- Agree on date for next visit.

Increase contacts with child and family. Conduct a home visit, connect them with a support group, link them with their community health volunteer, etc.

For further details on the counselling steps, refer to the Nutrition Algorithm Job Aid, MCHRB, C-IYCF Counselling and ECD Counselling Cards.

Steps for Facilitating Group Sessions

Prepare for the session in advance

- * **Choose a topic** for the session and review relevant counselling card(s). Plan for the time you have. If you are meeting with a group several times, choose a new topic each time. Do not cover all of the counselling cards in one session. Instead, focus on a theme/topic, such as: Responsive Care and Responsive Feeding (Cards 1 and 2), Responsive Feeding (Card 2) and Complementary Feeding (IYCF Card), Communication and Play (Cards 3 and 4), Monitoring Child Development and Feeding Difficulties (Cards 5 and 7), Regular Growth Monitoring and Promotion (IYCF Card) and Monitoring Child Development (Card 5), and Caring for the Caregiver (Card 6) and Breastfeeding on Demand (IYCF Card).
- * **Plan a group activity** that includes demonstration and time for caregivers to practise. Activities may include a game, drama, role plays, storytelling, making homemade toys, and more! Use the Group Session Facilitation Guide card for suggested activities and the Practical Tips on the counselling card(s) for more ideas.
- * **Prepare** any needed materials. Make sure caregivers are reminded of the meeting.

Step 1: Assess

- * **Introduce** yourself and set a positive, welcoming tone. If caregivers don't know one another, ask caregiver(s) to introduce themselves.
- * **Conduct an opening activity**, such as deep breathing, a prayer, or singing a song. Involve the children too!
- * **Recap** anything covered in the most recent session and ask for someone in the group to share their experiences with the topic of the last session. "What did you try at home? Did you have any difficulties?" Address any concerns.
- * **Look and listen.** Note who is in attendance today. For example, are they all mothers, or is it a mix of caregivers? What ages are the children of the caregivers in attendance?
- * **Observe** interactions among caregivers and children.

Step 2: Analyse

- * **Pause.** Think about your session plan and what you learned during Step 1.
- * **Make adaptations** to your plan, including the group activity, using what you learned during Step 1. Consider the ages of the children who are present. If there is a mix of caregivers, think about ways to engage fathers, grandparents, etc. Consider if additional guidance is needed for children with disabilities using Job Aid: Disability Inclusion.

Step 3: Act

- * **Start the more interactive part of your session!** Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages on the counselling card(s). Build on caregivers' experiences. Ask one or two questions to get opinions and experiences of those in attendance. Encourage the involvement of all participants (male and female, young and old) in activities and discussions.
- * **Conduct a group activity** that involves time for demonstration, practise, and discussion.
- * **Encourage feedback and discussion** about the activity. Summarise with the group and agree what caregivers should try in their homes.
- * **Praise** the caregivers for their efforts.
- * **Summarise** the session by asking caregivers to demonstrate or explain what they will go home and do with their child. Ask if caregiver(s) see barriers and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- * **Close** with a song or prayer. If appropriate, agree on the next meeting date and topic.
- * **Follow-up** with any caregivers you identified who might benefit from individual support, such as a home visit or referral.

Group Session Facilitation Guide

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

- * **Pass around the counselling card(s)** so the participants can see them as you introduce today's topic. Alternatively, you can walk around the group and show the card(s).
- * **Conduct a group activity using the Practical Tips.** Usually, it is helpful to have caregivers with children of similar ages sit together. Do not use all the cards in one session. Focus on only 1 or 2 topics, including any IYCF topics you have planned for the session. You can use example activities below or create your own!

Card 1:	Card 2:	Card 3:	Card 4:	Card 5:	Card 6:	Card 7:
Responsive Care Activities	Responsive Feeding Activities	Communication Activities	Play Activities	Monitoring Child Development Activities	Caring for the Caregiver Activities	Feeding Difficulties Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ask caregivers to discuss their daily routines, such as meal times, bathing, and bedtime. Caregivers can learn ideas from one another to create a routine for them and their child. * Have caregivers talk about their child's cues. What does your child do to tell you what they need? If possible, point out cues the child is showing. * Refer to Job Aid: Disability Inclusion, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Have caregivers talk about their child's feeding cues. What does your child do to tell you they are hungry? Or full? If possible, point out cues. * Conduct a drama to demonstrate the concept of responsive feeding. Include other family members in the drama, like a father or mother-in-law character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Have caregivers sing a song with their child. Children love songs that include hand gestures, like clapping! * Have caregivers share stories they tell to their children. What is your favorite story you tell your child before bedtime? * Choose songs and stories that are appropriate to the age of the children. * Refer to Job Aid: Disability Inclusion, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * If possible, conduct a session where caregivers make toys using everyday objects, like water bottles, rocks, string, and more. * For babies younger than 6 months, have caregivers practise putting their babies on their tummies, if there is a safe space for this. They will enjoy watching other babies! * Refer to Job Aid: Disability Inclusion, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ask caregivers to sit and discuss ways they observe their child's development. How do they observe their child communicating? Moving his/her body? Vision and hearing? * Ask caregivers to discuss resources in the community if they are concerned about their child's development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ask caregivers to share strategies they use when they are experiencing big emotions. What could they do to make themselves feel better? * Practise deep breathing together or another relaxing exercise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Introduce information from this card as appropriate/needed and have caregivers discuss how they can try the adaptations at home.

Summarise and close

Your loving care helps your child grow and develop



Card 1: Responsive Care

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * You are already helping your child learn and develop every day when you talk, play, feed, and care for your child. These simple activities help your child's brain to develop and make your child smart and clever.
- * Responsive care is about interacting with your child, showing love, and responding consistently to match the needs and interests of your child.
- * Responsive care is fun and easy to do! Dads, moms, grandparents, and the whole family play an important role in making your child feel safe, loved, and secure.
- * Infants and young children depend on caregivers for their safety and need to be supervised at all times.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

Learning your child's cues

- * Your child tells you what he or she needs by using his or her sounds, facial expressions, and body movements. Observe your child. With practice, you will often be able to read your child's cues and respond with what he or she needs.
- * Understanding your child's cues takes practice. Watch your child a lot and look for ways your child uses his or her eyes, mouth, and body to tell you what he or she needs. Crying is usually the last form of communication.
- * Create a daily routine for your child's care, including times for meals (starting at 6 months), bathing, and bedtime. Routines help your child feel secure because he or she knows and recognizes daily activities.

Responding when your child is upset

- * When your child is upset, think through possible solutions—he or she may be hungry, tired, soiled, uncomfortable, or sick.

Summarise and close

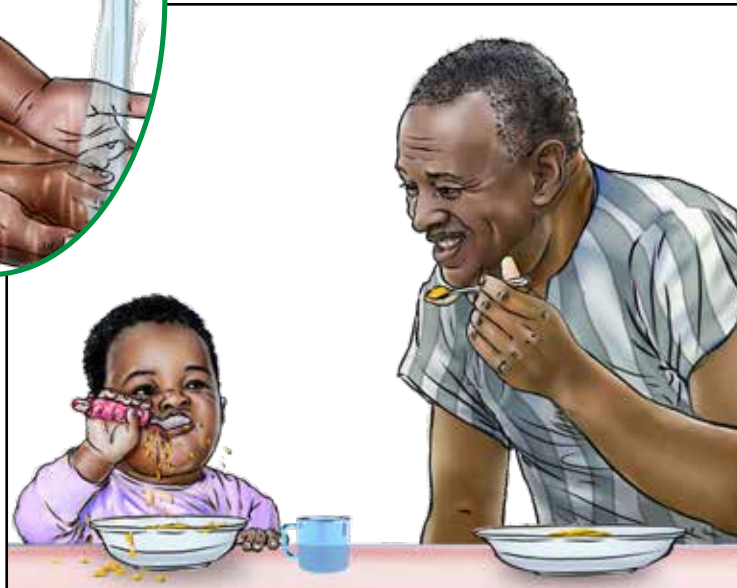
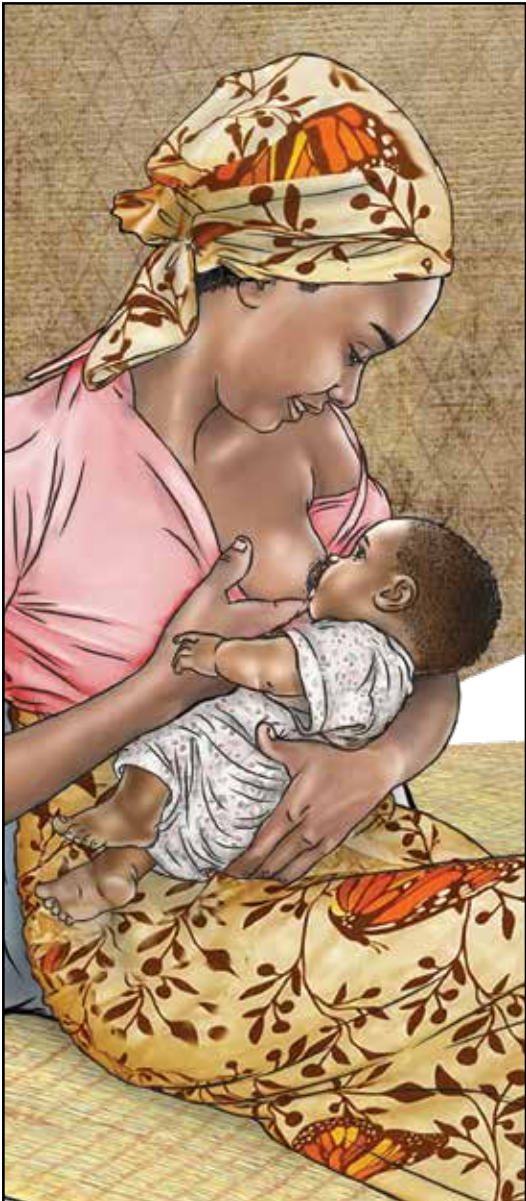
- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain what they will do with their child following your discussions. Ask if the caregiver(s) see any barriers and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- * If appropriate, agree on the next meeting date.

- * Your child may just want your attention. Once you have calmed your child, think about the movements and sounds he or she was making. Over time, you will notice patterns in your child's movements and sounds and the kinds of things he or she needs.

Responding when your child wants to interact with you

- * Your child can see from the day he or she is born. Look into your child's eyes often. It will help him or her to connect with you and he or she will learn to identify emotions in people.
- * Signs your baby wants your attention may include wide-open eyes, looking toward your face or toward someone who is talking, being alert, sucking on his or her fists or objects, clapping his or her hands or feet together, and grasping on to your finger or an object.
- * Respond to your child's sounds and movements, such as reaching out, babbling, smiling, or making faces, by producing similar vocalisations, gestures, and talking to him or her.

Teach your child to eat with love, patience, and good humour



Card 2: Responsive Feeding

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Practise responsive care during feeding times with your child to show support and love. This means listening and watching for cues that your child is hungry or full and responding appropriately to those cues.

- * Responsive feeding helps make feeding a time of love and learning. It helps you and your child develop a strong bond and encourages good eating habits in your child as she grows.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

All children:

- * Minimise distractions during mealtimes. Sit facing your child so you can focus on each other and on eating.
- * Pay attention to your child's cues of hunger and fullness to be sure he or she is getting enough food but you are not overfeeding him or her. Never force a child to eat and never use food as a reward.
- * Be patient and give your child time to eat. If your child shows signs of fullness, slow down or pause. Try offering another bite after a minute or two. End the feeding if he or she again indicates he or she is full.

Cues your baby is hungry

Wakes and tosses; sucks on fist (before 3 months); fusses or makes sounds; moves close to the breast area or touches the mother's dress around the breast

Cues your baby is full

Closes mouth or lips shut; turns head away; decreases or stops sucking; removes mouth from the nipple or falls asleep when full

Cues your child is hungry

Opens mouth while feeding to show wanting more; smiles, gazes at caregiver, or coos during feeding to show wanting more; moves head toward food or tries to swipe food toward mouth; reaches or points for spoon or food

Cues your child is full

Slows down or stops eating; pushes food away; shakes head to say "no more"

Birth up to 6 months:

- * Breast milk is all your baby needs for nutrition up to 6 months of age. Breastfeeding also stimulates loving feelings between mother and baby. It helps your baby to feel safe and comforted.
- * During breastfeeding, a baby is learning how to control his or her appetite and soothe him or herself. He or she is determining how much milk he or she needs and how much he or she wants to suck to comfort him or herself.

6 up to 9 months:

- * Slowly move the food in front of your baby's eyes. When he or she begins to follow and reach for the food, respond by offering the food to eat.

9 up to 12 months:

- * Your baby may be interested in starting to use cutlery or drinking water from a clean, open cup. Put some food on a spoon and let him or her try to feed him or herself. Give him or her a small cup with just a little bit of water to start and help him or her hold it. There will be spills, but encourage him or her. He or she will get better with practice!

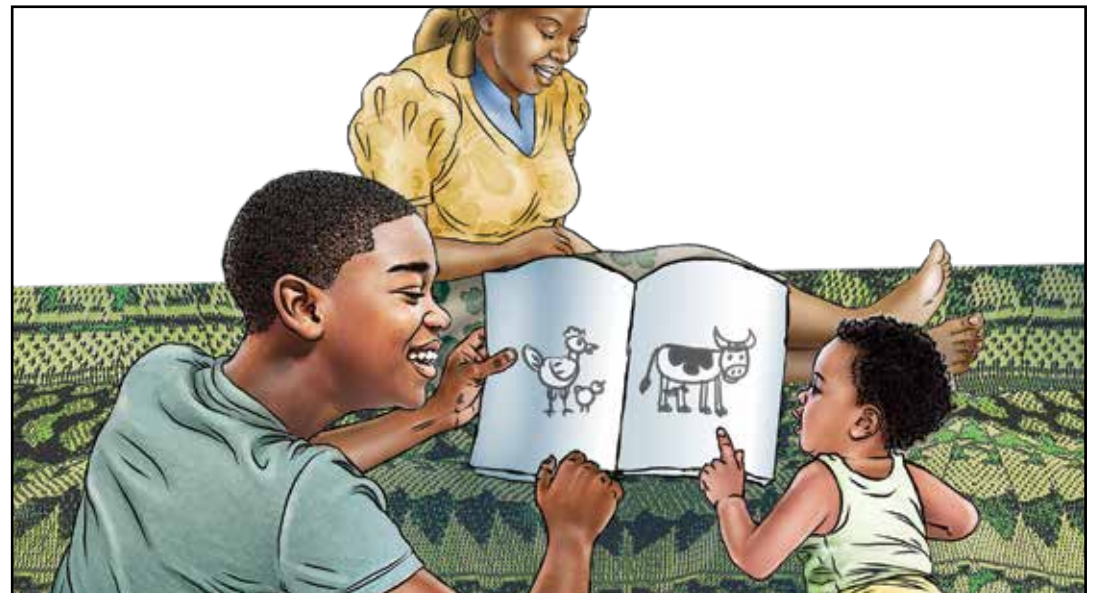
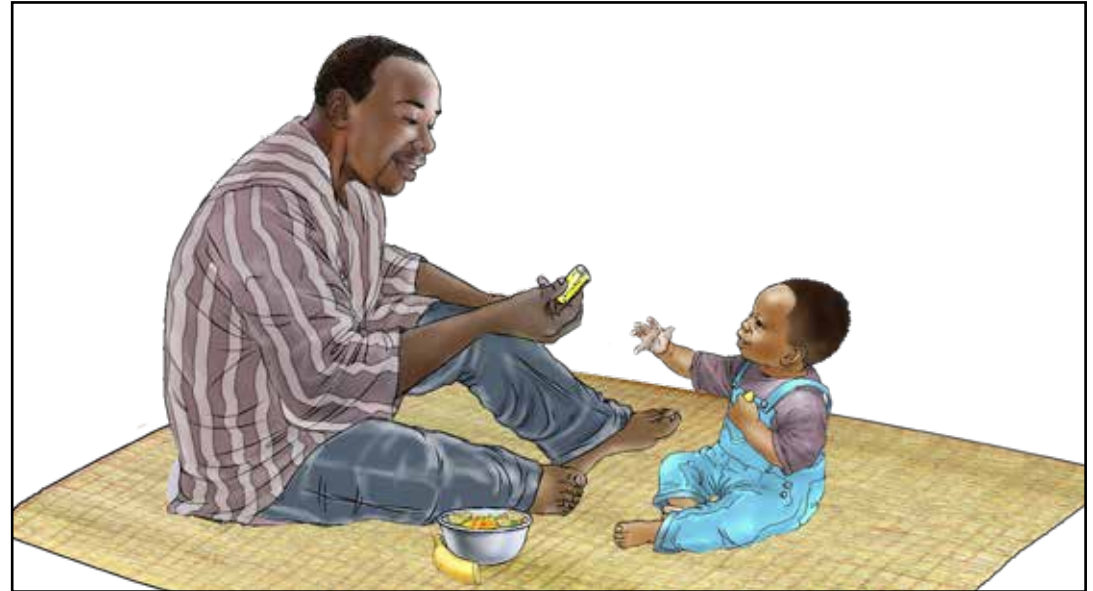
12 up to 24 months:

- * You can start to provide small, cut-up bites of family foods for your child, as his or her chewing skills are stronger now. Encourage him or her to feed him or herself—he or she will get better and better at coordinating how to scoop up food and bring it to his or her mouth.

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain what they will do with their child following your discussions. Ask if the caregiver(s) see any barriers and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- * If appropriate, agree on the next meeting date.

Listen and talk to your child all the time



Card 3: Communication

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Your child uses eye contact, cooing, facial expressions, and movement to tell you what her or she needs and wants from the day he or she is born. Follow his or her signals to understand his or her needs.
- * Babies begin to understand many words before they can speak. Talk and sing to your child often so that he or she can hear words. He or she will learn to talk by listening to you talk.
- * Have a conversation with sounds, words, and gestures. When your child communicates with you using sounds or movements, respond to him or her and he or she will respond back. You are each taking turns in the conversation.
- * You can help your child learn new words by expanding on his or her language. If he or she says one word, such as “papa,” build his or her language by adding more words: “Papa loves you!”

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

Birth up to 6 months:

- * During or after breastfeeding, talk and sing to your baby. He or she is listening and will find comfort in your voice.
- * Imitate your baby's sounds and gestures. He or she is communicating with you with his or her sounds and movements. When he coos, respond to him. Your baby needs to hear you talk.

6 up to 9 months:

- * Your baby can start to recognize common words. When you see your child is no longer hungry, ask her, “All done?” If she shows you that she is still hungry, say, “More?”
- * Respond to your baby's sounds and interests. Call your baby's name and notice his or her response.

9 up to 12 months:

- * Your baby will start to enjoy different soft foods now, such as soft fruits or cooked vegetables, and needs diverse, colorful foods to meet his or her nutritional needs. Use words to describe the food and slowly he or she will understand new words. Name the different foods and parts of his or her body that he or she is using to eat, like his or her fingers, mouth, and tongue.

- * Talk to your baby as you prepare his or her meal. Describe what is happening as you interact with him or her, such as saying, “Here is your bowl” or “Dad cooked you potatoes.” Ask him or her questions, “Do you want eggs?” Give him or her time to respond with gestures such as pointing or sounds before you provide a verbal answer.

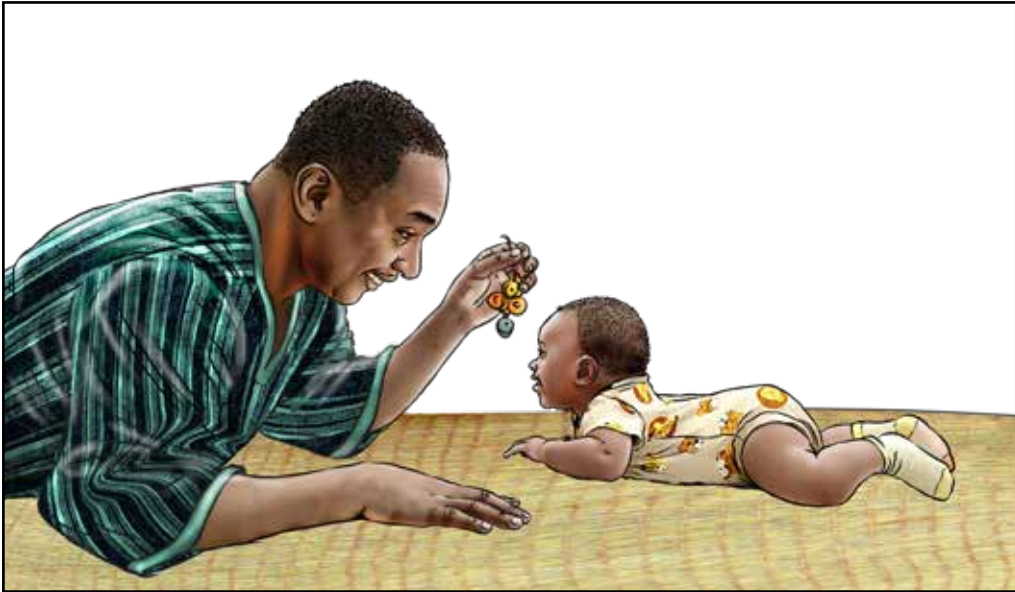
12 up to 24 months:

- * As you feed your child, describe the colors and textures of her food. Encourage your child to speak by asking him or her the name or the color of the food he or she is eating. Point and tell your child the names of the foods after he or she has had a chance to try and answer you!
- * Sing with your child. Start a song and let him sing parts that he knows. Over time, your child can sing more and more him or herself as he or she learns more words and you can practise taking turns.
- * Children learn to love stories when they read together with their parents every day. Ask him or her to point to different people and animals in a book, magazine, or poster. Praise him or her for finding the animals and objects!

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain what they will do with their child following your discussions. Ask if the caregiver(s) see any barriers and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- * If appropriate, agree on the next meeting date.

Give your child daily opportunities to learn through play



Card 4: Play

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Children learn by playing, observing, copying, and trying new things starting from the moment they are born. Your child enjoys and learns through playing with you! All your child needs is you
- * Give your child opportunities to explore the world around him or her through play. He and she will enjoy playing with his or her fingers and toes, your face, and household objects. Follow his or her lead, encouraging play with safe objects that interest him or her. Observe his or her body language and sounds and do not force your child to play with something when he or she is not interested.
- * Give your child challenging but achievable tasks. Guide your child's actions and build on what he or she can do to make the task slightly more difficult.
- * Accidents are more common when children are cared for by someone younger than 12 years old or are left alone.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

Birth up to 6 months:

- * Slowly move colorful objects for your baby to see and reach for. Watch his or her eyes move side to side as he or she follows the object
- * Place your baby on his or her tummy with a colorful object out in front of him or her. Watch your child reach for it and praise him or her when he or she picks it up! He or she learns by putting objects in his or her mouth so make sure the object is clean, not sharp, and not too small that he or she could swallow it.

6 up to 9 months:

- * As you introduce new foods for your baby, he or she is learning new textures and tastes. Encourage him or her when he or she tries new foods!
- * Give your baby clean, safe household objects to pick up, touch, feel, bang, and explore. Examples of simple toys to play with include small containers or a pot with a spoon.
- * Draw or make simple picture books to develop your baby's curiosity and help him or her learn new things

9 up to 12 months:

- * During mealtimes, give your baby small finger foods and encourage him or her to try new, healthy foods. He or she is starting to learn how to pick up things with his or her fingers and chew. He or she will often make a mess and that is okay! He or she is learning to feed him or herself and exploring different types of foods!
- * Play games like "Jack, where are you?" with your baby. While he or she is looking at you, cover your face with hands or fabric. Say, "Where am I?" Open hands and say, "Boo! Here I am!" Laugh with him or her as he or she sees you! He or she is starting to learn that you do not disappear when he or she does not see you.

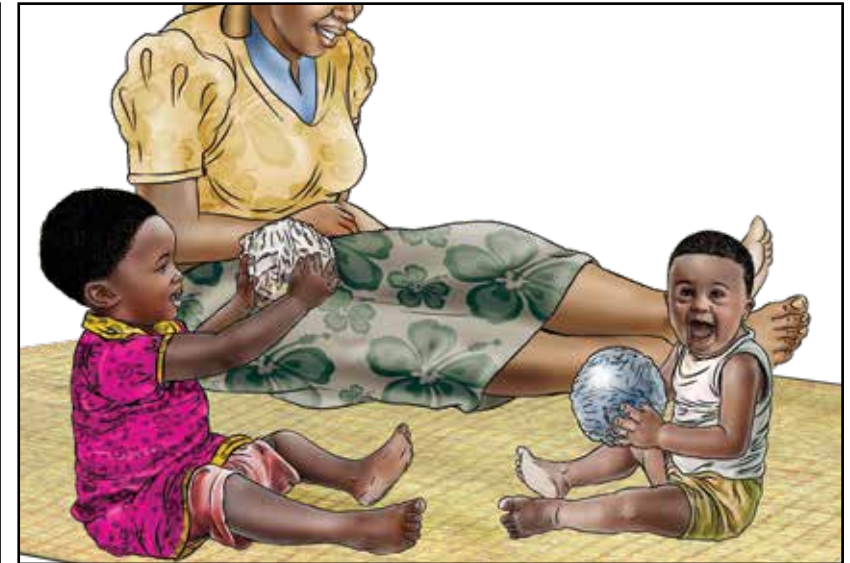
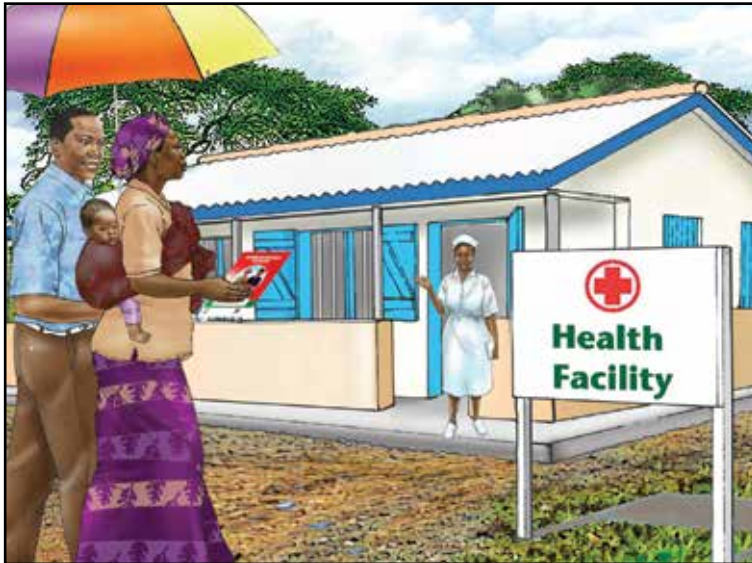
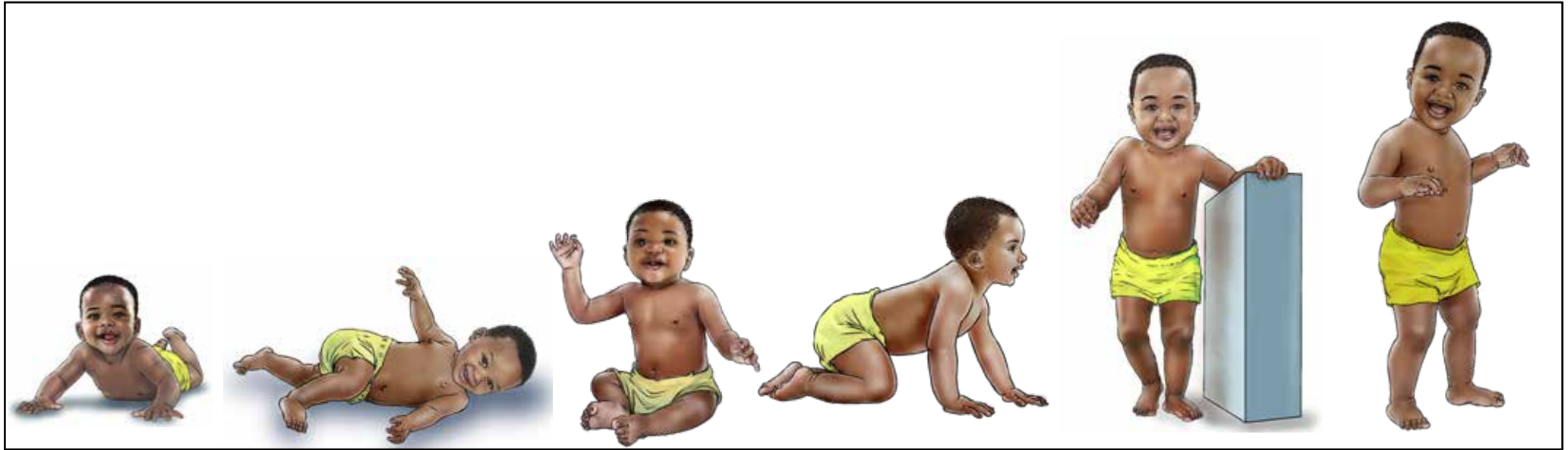
12 up to 24 months:

- * Play with your child and encourage him or her to try harder tasks. Encourage him or her to stack objects, knock them over, and start again. Give your child more objects to stack. Help him or her if he or she gets stuck.
- * Encourage your child's imagination using sock puppets. Make up a story using the puppets.

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain what they will do with their child following your discussions. Ask if the caregiver(s) see any barriers and problem-solve together how to overcome those barriers.
- * If appropriate, agree on the next meeting date.

Seek help if you are concerned about your child's development



Card 5: Monitoring Child Development

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Children learn at different paces. Some children learn quickly, and some children need more time. But remember, all children can learn! Children's skills build upon one another. For example, a child must learn to sit before he can stand.
- * Some children are born with or develop conditions that can affect their abilities. Children may develop differently in how they move, see, hear, learn, think, or interact with others.
- * Many conditions contribute to children developing differently. You may hear many things about disabilities in your community, but it is important to know that disabilities are not the fault of the mom or dad, and they are not a curse. All children can learn, and some children may need extra support.
- * All children should have their growth, development, hearing, and vision monitored to identify any concerns early. If you are concerned about your child's development, seek support from a health care provider.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

Concerns about development

- * **IF CONCERNS, SAY:** All children develop at different paces. If there are any difficulties, children benefit from early identification and support. You should visit a health facility to discuss your concerns further with a skilled provider.
- * **WARNING SIGNS FOR REFERRALS:** If your child ever regresses, meaning he or she stops being able to perform skills that he or she used to do such as talking or walking, this can be a sign of a serious problem. You must seek care immediately

Concerns about hearing or vision

- * **IF CONCERNS, SAY:** You should visit a health facility to discuss your concerns further with a skilled provider and have them check your child's hearing and vision.
- * **WARNING SIGNS FOR REFERRALS:** If your child does not respond to noise or does not use her eyes to follow your face or objects by age 3 months, seek care at your health facility.

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver to explain to you what they will do with their child following your discussions.
- * Make sure there is a clear plan for a visit to the health facility if there are any concerns or issues. Brainstorm with the caregiver ways to address barriers to accessing a health facility, if necessary.

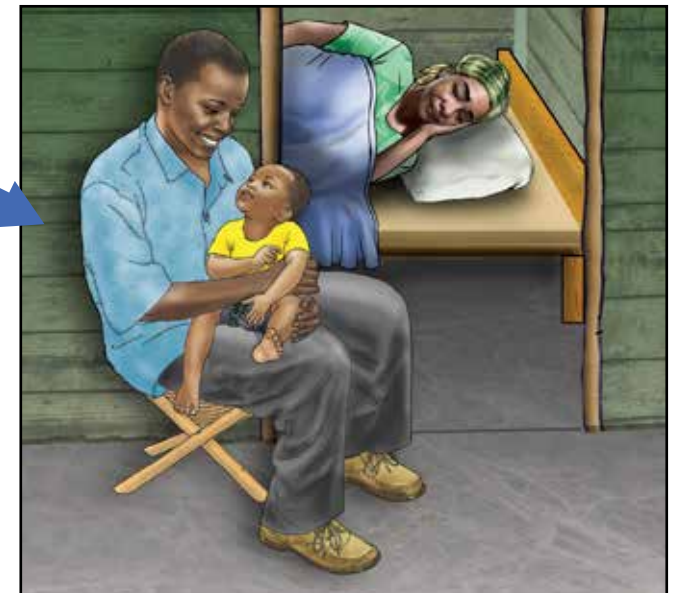
Concerns about feeding

- * **IF CONCERNS, SAY:** I would be happy to talk with you about some strategies to help your child to feed. If the problems persist, you should visit a health facility. (See: "Special Circumstances Counselling Card 7.")
- * **WARNING SIGNS FOR REFERRALS:** Seek care immediately if your child is losing weight, frequently coughs or tears while feeding, has rigid muscles or jaw clenching that prevent feeding, vomits frequently, or sweats excessively or tires quickly when feeding.

No concerns

- * Praise the caregiver for all of their efforts to help their child grow and develop! Encourage the caregiver to keep practicing responsive care and age-appropriate feeding practices. See IYCF cards on breastfeeding and complementary feeding topics and the Communication and Play cards from this RCEL Addendum for more specific ideas.

Take care of yourself in order to care for your child



Card 6: Caring for the Caregiver

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Your child loves spending time with you. He or she is learning by observing, imitating, listening, and interacting with you. Parenting is rewarding and fun, but it is not always easy.
- * Feeling big emotions during caregiving is normal because it can be very stressful. Feeling these emotions is not something to feel guilty or ashamed about. All caregivers need emotional support and help from their partners, families, friends, and community.
- * Creating routines is helpful for you and your child. Think of ways to include activities you enjoy in your routine. Consider singing, sewing, exercise, dancing, drawing, or any activity that calms you and helps you to take care of yourself.
- * Talk with your spouse, friends, or family members. Share your experiences parenting with a confidant. Share both what is going well and any challenges you are having.
- * Whenever you feel exhausted and overwhelmed, it is good to reach out for help from your partner, family, or friends. If these feelings do not go away, seek care from your health facility. Depression and anxiety are common challenges, especially in the postpartum period, and require treatment.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips

Birth up to 6 months:

- * Your baby is feeding on demand all day and all night and depending on mom and dad for everything.
- * Ask your partner, other family members, and friends for help. It will benefit your baby and you and give you time to take care of yourself, such as time to visit with a friend, get some sleep or do any healthy activity that helps you relax. This can help prevent you from feeling exhausted and overwhelmed.

6 up to 12 months:

- * Your baby is starting to feed on solid foods, sleeps less, and is moving around! He or she might develop some fears of people he or she does not know and want to be with you all the time.
- * It is okay to feel frustrated because you cannot get your baby to calm down or he or she is not behaving how you would like. Take a moment and take several slow, deep breaths in and out. Focus on your breathing to calm yourself before going back to try to calm your baby. Do not hesitate to ask a family member or friend to help if you need a little rest.

12 up to 24 months:

- * Your child is developing his or her emotions and he and she will soon start to do more things for him or herself like getting dressed and toileting. He or she will get frustrated when he or she tries but cannot do things him or herself. He or she may appear stubborn or get upset.
- * Recognize that this is normal and do not get angry. Step away if you need to, and do not be hard on yourself. Ask your partner or a confidant to look after your child while you step away. Even 10 minutes away from a stressful situation can help you feel more relaxed.

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain to you what they will do to take care of themselves following your discussions.
- * Make sure there is a clear plan for a visit to the health facility if there are any concerns or issues. Brainstorm ways to address barriers to accessing a health facility, if necessary.

Difficulty controlling head or body



Persistent difficulty chewing or swallowing



Difficulty self-feeding



Card 7: Feeding Difficulties

Step 1: Assess

Step 2: Analyse

Step 3: Act

Introduce today's topic using the Key Messages

- * Sometimes children have difficulties feeding, and they may require additional support to be able to feed well. It is important to consult a health care provider if you have any concerns about your child's feeding.
- * Children with feeding difficulties are at increased risk of becoming malnourished. Regular growth monitoring is important for all children.
- * Seek immediate care at a facility if your child is losing weight, or displays warning signs like frequent coughing or tearing while feeding, jaw tightening that prevents feeding, fast breathing or breathing becoming wet-sounding, excessive sweating or tiring quickly when feeding, or vomiting after feeding.

Praise, demonstrate, and practise with the Practical Tips for complementary feeding starting at 6 months

Difficulty controlling head or body:

- * A stable, upright position with support for eating and drinking is one of the most important factors for safe feeding. Make sure your child's whole body is supported well, so that she can focus on eating.
- * If your child is floppy, provide support to his or her back and head using your body or a chair. Always keep his or her head upright while feeding to prevent choking or having food go down his or her airway.

Persistent difficulty chewing or swallowing:

- * Difficulty chewing and swallowing can cause choking and can lead to illness. Consult with a health care provider and ask for specific feeding strategies for your child.

- * Consider mashing or pureeing foods by passing soft foods through a sieve. It is easier for children to learn to control foods in their mouth and swallow if they are only one texture.
- * Water and other liquids are easy for children to choke on if they have problems swallowing. Never pour liquids into your child's mouth. Consider thicker liquids like soft porridge or yogurt.

Difficulty self-feeding:

- * Spoons and forks with thicker handles are easier for children to hold. Attach a rubber tube or piece of wood to the spoon handle to make it thicker.
- * Plates with steep sides may make it easier for some children to scoop up food themselves.

Note: If a child is having difficulties latching to the breast, review IYCF cards for guidance on different positions, breast milk expression, and safe cup feeding. If the child is sick with common illnesses such as fever or diarrhea, refer to the IYCF card on feeding a sick baby under 6 months of age or a sick child older than 6 months of age.

Summarise and close

- * Close by asking the caregiver(s) to demonstrate or explain what they will do with their child following your discussions.
- * Make sure there is a clear plan for a visit to the health facility if there are any concerns or issues. Brainstorm ways to address barriers to accessing a health facility, if necessary.

Tips for Supporting Children with Disabilities to Engage in Play and Learning

Modify the skill level

Consider sharing Practical Tips that the child can do, or are slightly challenging for the child, rather than focusing on the tips that match the child's age.

- * Make an activity simpler by breaking it into multiple steps, such as providing only two objects to stack rather than many and adding more as the child progresses.
- * Provide materials that are easier for a child to use: a container with a handle the child can grip rather than a jar with no handles.
- * Consider adaptive devices to help a child: add a thicker handle to a spoon or utensil to make self-feeding easier or provide a supportive chair to help the child to sit.



Add a sensory component (touch, sound, sight, smell)

Adding more touch, sound, smell, or a visual component will stimulate the child's senses, particularly if the child has an impairment that affects their senses, such as difficulty seeing or hearing.

- * Add a touch component to a story: if the story is about bath time, splash a little water on the child's hand.
- * Add a smell to a shaker toy: add strips of lemongrass or spices in a container with bottle caps.
- * Provide different textures of playthings: things that are smooth (like plastic), soft (like different fabrics), or rough (like stiff leaves glued to cardboard). Ensure that the objects are safe: clean, not sharp, and larger than your child's palm to prevent choking.



Support the child in exploring

Play should be led by the child, with the caregiver providing support only as needed by the child. Be patient and let the child take time to engage with an object or an activity. Remove objects that get in the way of playing.

- * Provide some extra support during tummy time (like rolled-up fabric) under the child's chest to prop the child's torso up or place the child on your chest and recline back.
- * Guide the child's hand alongside yours to explore an object or position the child in a way that helps her be able to look around and engage in play. Make sure the child's arms and legs are not restricted.
- * Look for the subtle cues the child may use to communicate, such as using eye movements to look at something they want.



