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Module PW-M1

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# Developing parental capacity to identify and understand children's physical and emotional needs

## Content

- Parents' concerns and knowledge about children's development in general
- Factors that influence children's development, and how the children might have been affected
- Information about child development
- Guidelines to support children's development
- What sort of parenting best helps children's development
- Approaches to facilitate children's development.

# Materials

- h** Handout
- n** Practitioner notes
- r** Record
- w** Worksheet

- Developmental progression: Indications of expected changes and growth [PW-1] **h**
- What seems to influence children's development [PW-2] **h**
- Positive developments and challenges [PW-3] **h**
- Children's developmental needs and how to promote them [PW-4] **h**

## Main steps

Inform parents about the agenda and check on issues from previous meetings.

### Concerns about the child's development

Discuss these concerns with the parents.



- Have you or any member of your family had concerns about your child's development at any time?
- What about your health visitor or general practitioner or as a result of the assessments that took place earlier?
- Were children's social care or the court concerned about your child's development?
- What were their concerns, and what do you feel about them? What sorts of responses have you received from other people, including family and professionals?

## activity

Using the development charts

Use 'Developmental progression: Indications of expected changes and growth' [PW-1] to have a discussion with the parents about the way development unfolds, about similarities and differences with the way that their child has developed, and whether this helps them understand whether they have had difficulties understanding or managing their child's development.

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### Developmental progression: Indications of expected changes and growth

	1 month	2 months
<b>Physical change, posture and large movements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lay back with head to one side, arms and legs in one plane, extended, at right angles</li> <li>• Flexion, knee, quiet, toes of feet turned inward</li> <li>• Large jerky movements of limbs, arms more active than legs</li> <li>• At rest, hands closed and thumbs tucked in</li> <li>• Fingers and toes fan out during continued movement of limbs</li> <li>• When cheek touched, turns to same side, or gently rubs face back onto</li> <li>• When lifted or pulled to sit head falls heavily back</li> <li>• Head turning, head falls forward, with back in one complete curve</li> <li>• Placed downwards on flat, head immediately turns to side, arms and legs flexed under</li> <li>• Neck, shoulders turned up</li> <li>• Head touching on hard surface, person down face, nape, back and often makes reflex "crying" movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now prefer to lie on back with head to midline</li> <li>• Limbs more pliable, movements smoother and more coordinated</li> <li>• When arms extended, flexion more usually open</li> <li>• Bring hands together from side into midline, one after the other</li> <li>• Kick legs upward, leg alternating or occasionally together</li> <li>• Head turning, back back straight, upright in lumbar region, with head erect and steady for several seconds before looking forward</li> <li>• Placed downwards on face, lifts head and supports weight in midline, using</li> <li>• Elbows as support, and often touching at table surface, high enough, backwards for</li> <li>• Head resting with feet on hard surface, legs at feet</li> </ul>
<b>Vision and fine movements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turns head and eyes towards light</li> <li>• Shows responsiveness or alignment of head or chin with</li> <li>• Follows person face horizontally with eyes at 1 foot</li> <li>• Shows eyes together when pencil light shines directly into them at 1-2 inches</li> <li>• Notices when dangling toy shaken in line of vision at 6-8 inches and follows in slow movement with eyes from side to side</li> <li>• Grasps or reaches for toy through approximately quarter circle, before head falls back to side</li> <li>• Grasps or reaches for nearby toy when the foot or other is held with successfully start facial expression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually very alert, particularly interested in nearby familiar faces</li> <li>• Moves head deliberately to look around him</li> <li>• Follows adult's movements near ear</li> <li>• Follows dangling toy at 6-10 inches above face through half circle to side, and usually also vertically from chest to knee</li> <li>• Notices movement of own hands before face and beginning to bring and uncurl hands together at finger tip</li> <li>• Recognises familiar hands and makes eager reaching movements as approaches his foot</li> <li>• Reaches with objects within 6-10 inches from more than a vertical or horizontal reference</li> <li>• Eyes converge as dangling toy is moved horizontally</li> <li>• Exclusive blink shown</li> </ul>

- The charts describe children's development in different areas. Point out that children do different things at different ages.
- Show the way in which different skills unfold and occur in a sequential way.
- Discuss whether the patterns in the chart are similar to what their child achieved at a similar age and stage: in what ways they were advanced, in what ways they were less advanced.
- Point out the rows for physical changes; vision and fine movements; hearing and speech; social behaviour, relationships and play; and understanding and intellectual capacity; and the different stages for each of these areas.
- Stress that one stage helps determine what happens at the next, that there is a range of so-called normal development – i.e. what most children do. Discuss what concerns the parents had about their children at the different stages, what the easy or hard stages were, what stages caused most worry and whether they got any help with particular problems.
- Discuss with the parents whether looking at these developmental charts helps.

## Discussion of factors that have influenced children's development in general and how these factors might have affected their child

The suggested scripts describe a number of different areas which can have an impact on children's development. 'What seems to influence children's development' [PW-2] summarises the areas that might affect their child.

It is helpful to use a Socratic questioning approach to check on what influences each of these areas may have had on their child's development – for example, Who had the most influence helping your child to learn and be mobile? What did you do which was helpful? What was your role?

'What seems to influence children's development' lists the sorts of influences which are important in all children's lives and which can have a positive or negative effect. Perhaps we could discuss each of them and you could say how you think your child's development has been affected, either helpfully or not.

Perhaps we could discuss which have been the important influences on your child's development, looking at all these different areas.

## Developmental information

What are the particular challenges of each stage of development? See 'Child development: Birth to 10 years' [PW-3].

### h What seems to influence children's development 1 of 3

These scripts look at different areas that influence children's development – immediate family, extended family, the community and other children and young people.

**Family influences – influences from parents' own childhoods**

Many people find that the way that family members get on with each other can have quite an influence on how a particular child develops, for example the youngest child when there are a number of brothers and sisters will either be helped and will grow up very able, or will want to grow up separate and to be a youngest baby when they should be.

**Influence of the extended family**

Sometimes the way that parents have grown up themselves, whether they had to grow up very fast and take a lot of responsibility to take parental roles long before they were ready and the way that they were looked after can have an influence on the way parents feel about their own children. They may feel that they would not want their children to be that grown up and so perhaps have few expectations, or they may expect them to be grown up, look after their younger brothers or sisters in the way they had to themselves.

**Influences from the community**

The way in which the extended family acts is important. Sometimes the first child can be a tremendous focus for all the grandparents, and sometimes when there are a number of children they do not create much interest. Sometimes children can bring the family together and thus will be a lot of support and advice and help, sometimes much less so.

Schools, religious groups, community organisations can be very important in influencing children's development. Children can get a tremendous amount of support from school teachers, or sometimes they seem to go backwards and really not thrive.

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### h Child development: Birth to 10 years 1 of 2

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A baby's first year is all growth and change. At this stage a baby is very demanding and helpless. Parents cannot expect to control a young baby through any kind of punishment or discipline.

4 months	Starts to sleep more regularly. Once often awakes when wants to be held or when physically uncomfortable. Tensely awakes at all and others.
By 4 months	May like to be propped up or held, instead of left lying down. Watches everything with interest. Will begin to sit or stand more easily. May start to smile back when smiled at, and become more aware of surroundings.
Very vocal age. Cries often, often in a long wail. Can often wail, but will cry when mother leaves. Likes to be held standing up to breast.	
6-7 months	Working at standing and may walk a step or more. Some begin to say 'dada' or other short words. Can understand the meaning of 'no' at some time around 10 months. Loves to crawl and will grab at anything – see everything. Likes games like peek-a-boo.
By 1 year	Becomes more excitable. Likes to stand. Crawls quickly, doesn't keep still for long. May be walking and sitting.
2-2½ years	A difficult age. Stubborn. Demanding. Can't make decisions and stick to them, so it's hard to get a 2½-year-old to sleep.
3 years	Begin to like to share, to say 'no' or 'mine' or 'yes'. Likes to make friends. No longer so demanding. Now wants to play for hours. Enjoy learning. Can begin to draw off a little and try to 'help' around the house. Motor development increases greatly in riding tricycles, jumping and throwing balls. The desire to please and conform is great and practical begins.
3-5½ years	Again, a more demanding time. Becomes more advanced physically. May be very shy one minute and very bold the next. Needs more understanding and affection – an extended age of growing and changing.
4 years	'Use of broader' behaviour, mood change quickly. Hiding, kicking, throwing, pulling, clinging, loud and laughing. Still has tantrums but is able to understand the difference between lying and pretending. Showing and bringing on concern. Parents have to control the most dramatic behaviours, but the 4-year-old needs to see their independence too. Needs to see things they can't see up or down with all their own energy (overgrown, etc.).
4½ years	Begin to question what is real and what is pretend. More like to talk about things more than before. They want to know about all sorts of things. Begins to be fond of most's efforts to control them. Pretence and drawing, building with blocks can interest a 4½-year-old for long periods of time.

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In 'Child development: Birth to 10 years' are some statements about the particular challenges of children at each age. Perhaps we can discuss how they apply to you.

Children can be very different at each of these stages, and can present particular difficulties. On the handout are the needs of children of different ages and it would be helpful to discuss which were relevant to your children's growing up.

It is helpful to discuss how you found these particular phases. If one of your children was particularly challenging or made very slow progress over these phases and people were concerned about your child showing some developmental delay, what happened about this, how did you feel and how do you feel about it today?

## What is the best we can do to help children's development?

See 'Children's developmental needs and how to promote them' [PW-4].

### activity

#### Children's developmental needs and how to promote them



What do you think are the most important attributes to support a child's development? In the handout we have listed some of the qualities that are generally agreed to help children's development. We are going to discuss these to see whether that was easy for you or whether it was challenging.



Following discussion, what do you think you have been most successful at, what has been most difficult?

What do you think as partners you feel about each other's contribution to these qualities?

**h Children's developmental needs and how to promote them**

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Birth-2 year	Comfort, stimulation and a sense of security are important. Parents must meet a child's needs (feeding and caring) on a regular basis.
1-3 years	Encourage exploration of the world. Help speech development. Provide firm, consistent and gentle limits. Parents should expect there to be individual differences with each child.
3-6 years	Encourage competence by teaching the child skills and knowledge. Establish control by being fair and having consequences consistent and predictable. Encourage positive relationships with other children and with preschool or day care.
6-12 years	Child can reason and seek fairness. Consistency with rules, punishment and reward is important. Support the child's school efforts and maintain a positive relationship with the school. Increase the child's responsibilities at home. Allow more autonomy (increased privacy and privileges). Encourage peer group activities. Discuss values and social behaviour (drugs, sex and safety).
12-18 years	Recognise biological and social changes (sex, privacy, autonomy). Establish mutual role making (allow for negotiation, conflict resolution). Consistency is still extremely important. Your child's peers are extremely influential at this time.

**General guidelines**

- It's a good mix model.
- Provide consistency and structure.
- Provide nurture and acceptance.
- Be sure that the child feels listened to and valued in your family.
- Love yourself and put yourself in a good support system.
- Provide the child with community supports.
- Assure your child to identify and accept their feelings.
- Give the child constructive feedback about how they interact with the family.
- Allow the child to make some decisions.
- The child must be able to trust you and feel secure before they can move on to more healthy development.