



# CARING FOR BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN 10 messages for children to learn & share

1. Cuddle, talk, laugh, sing and play games with babies and young children as much as you can. They learn from the fun things you do with them!



2. Babies and young children become angry, afraid and tearful easily, and can't explain their feelings. All emotions are normal! Comfort them and be gentle and kind.



3. Young children learn quickly: how to move and walk, make sounds, eat and drink. Help them, but let them feel cared for and safe.



4. All young children are important. Include all young children in fun activities—especially those who are sick or who have special needs.



5. Young children will copy your actions and those of others. Look after yourself, behave well near them, and show them good habits.



6. When young children cry, there is a reason (hunger, fear, fever, pain, anger). Be curious and stay close by to help them.



7. Help prepare young children for learning by playing number and word games, painting and drawing. Read stories together, enjoy playful rhymes, and sing and dance together.



8. As a group, watch and record in a notebook or with audio how babies and young children grow and develop — showing when they do important firsts like rolling over, speaking and walking.



9. Help prevent diseases by checking babies and young children are clean especially washing their hands and faces, helping them to drink safe water and eat enough good food.



10. Give loving care to babies and young children — and don't forget to take care of yourself too!



## Frequently Asked Questions About Our Posters

- **Who is the poster for?** Educators of many kinds, parents & children aged 10-14.
- **Where might it be used?** Schools, Early years settings, special disability units, at home, health clinics, children's clubs, religious groups etc.
- **Is it enough for children to learn the messages?** The messages are designed to be 'doorways' to discussion & action. They are for children to understand & use, not just to memorise.
- **Why are the faces of the people on the poster multi-ethnic?** Children for Health has a global audience, so we use multi-ethnic faces on our posters.
- **How do I use the messages?** Be creative! Focus on one topic for a week, month or term!
- **What is the Rainbow Stick?** When a child learns & shares a message & returns with a story about how they shared that message, a teacher or other adult rewards the child with a strip of coloured fabric to tie to their stick. Children for Health has 100 messages & every child can leave primary school holding their Rainbow Stick with 100 coloured 'ribbons' tied on it showing everyone that they know 100 health messages.
- **Why is one picture bigger than the others?** It's the Children for Health 'key' message for this topic.
- **Can I add to, change, adapt, translate or simplify the messages?** YES! BUT check with experts that your new or revised messages are accurate.
- **Are there other important messages you have not mentioned?** Our messages are short & simple. You can add other short & simple messages.



## Further Information for Educators

- Adapt and localize messages as different communities face specific challenges in their care of babies and young children.
- Find out more about development milestones from local experts on early childhood development and ask them to talk to children about this.
- Use and adapt local songs, stories and poems and ask children to adapt and practice them.
- If you know children with special needs, find out more about them and their home and ask how you and other children can support their development and learning.
- We know programmes that ask young adolescents to be involved in formal teaching and learning activities with young children to help prepare them for school. Children for Health does not support this! We think young adolescents have a vital role as informal and playful carers and companions.

## Basket of Activities

- MAKE our own messages on **Caring for Babies and Young Children** in our own words and our own language!
- MEMORISE the messages so we never forget them!
- SHARE the messages with other children and our families!
- DIVIDE into groups of boys and girls; have boys play girls games and girls play boys games. Afterwards, have both groups discuss the games. For example, do you agree with the games being called BOYS or GIRLS games? Why or why not?
- DISCUSS 'good' and 'bad' behaviour at home or in the school and why they are described like this.
- MAKE posters to show others what we know about this topic.
- ORGANISE Toy-Making Competitions like safe mobiles, rattles, building blocks, dolls, animals and picture books; at home, in school or community groups.
- PLAY with young children! COLLECT and sort leaves, seeds, stones and household objects. PLAY circle games with clapping, songs, and hand motions. BUILD little houses or forts with cloths and cushions. PLAY counting and strategy games like Mancala. Do finger play using rhymes, ACT simple stories with puppets or costumes. Do pretend play like cooking, sweeping, or caring for dolls. IMITATE animal sounds and movements.
- HELP young children with safe play using water, sand and household objects.
- PLAY group games like follow-the-leader, passing stones in rhythm, singing call-and-response songs.
- MAKE drawings and posters to show simple steps to promote health and prevent disease like washing hands and faces with soap, immunisation, and eating a balanced diet. Make these activities fun for young children by doing them with a song or rhyme.
- MAKE a short play about caregivers playing with young children. Make a dialogue between two mothers; one who believes young children should be kept quiet and another who believes in having fun!
- MIME/act out an emotion/feeling only with gestures and facial expressions. Other children guess what the feeling or emotion is.
- MAKE a short story about things you enjoy doing with young children and the things that you want them to learn. For example, going for a walk or visiting friends. Include things that you see, and the sounds that you hear such as the wind, animals or vehicles.
- ASK parents and grandparents why and what makes babies cry and laugh. Share your results.
- A class or group can ADOPT A BABY from the local community. The mother visits the group each month to share how baby is growing.
- MAKE up a rhyme or song to describe simple steps to prevent diseases like keeping clean and drinking safe water and sing them at home with younger siblings.
- OLDER children interview parents and ask what was most difficult for them when caring for their babies and young children, and what helped them the most.
- ASK a health worker, community worker or a science teacher to tell you more about how a baby's brain grows. Ask them to use stories and questions.
- OLDER children can ask the elderly in the community to teach them rhymes, songs, stories and games, and sing songs for babies and younger children.

