Families, Education and Well-Being

Co-organized by The United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD)
In partnership with the Department of Public Information NGO Relations (DPI NGO)

International Day of Families
Thursday, 18 May 2017

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Overview

Part I. Historic Moment for Early Childhood Development

Part II. What is learning? Early education the forgotten 1st 1000 days.

Part III. Situation and Response… multisectorality for the youngest children
Part I: Historic Moment for ECD
Building on rich history, embracing the SDGs and evolving for a changing global context

**Evolution of Strategy over Time**

**Early history (1946-1980)**
- Advocate for children’s right to health
- Mobilize resources
- Deliver basic health services and disease-control programs
- Provide supplies and equipment

**Child Survival Revolution (1980s and 1990s)**
- Deliver life saving, cost effective interventions (focused on Growth, ORS, Breastfeeding, Immunization)
- Promote access to affordable and sustainable primary health care services (Bamako Initiative)

**MDG era (2000-2015)**
- Eradicate polio
- Accelerate declines in child and maternal mortality by scaling up high impact interventions
- Leverage increase in development assistance to health
- Lead the equity agenda for child survival and health

**SDG era (2016-2030)?**
- Achieve sustainable and equitable coverage of high-impact interventions to prevent maternal & child mortality
- Leverage UNICEF’s multi-sector advantage
- Strengthen UNICEF’s operational role in emergency/fragile contexts
- Mobilize and target domestic health resources in higher capacity contexts
- Continue to be the voice for children
What is learning? What is early education?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEBzhTo
Message 1: The relationship between genes and environment is closer than ever before
• In the 1st years of life the brain grows at the pace of 700/1000 new neural connections per second-- a pace which is never achieved again

• By 3 years of age, a child brain is twice as active as an adult brain

• 50 - 75% of energy consumption in the first few years of life is allocated to brain development

• We mammals on planet earth thrived because of our adaptive brain development during early childhood

• 87% of brain weight is acquired by 3 years of age (1100 grams)
Message 2: Timing matters - early intervention is the answer

Nelson, Fox & Zeanah (2013)
First 1000 days of life: the foundation of life!

The Ability to Change Brains Decreases Over Time

- Normal Brain Plasticity Influenced by Experience
- Physiological “Effort” Required to Enhance Neural Connections

Source: Levitt (2009)
Message 3: Toxics stress during early childhood = lifelong impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>POSITIVE</strong></th>
<th>Brief increase in heart rate, mild elevation in stress hormone, Cortisol</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOLERABLE</strong></td>
<td>Serious temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOXIC</strong></td>
<td>Prolonged activation of stress response systems, in the absence of protective relationships</td>
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The Developing Brain Needs Nutrition, Enrichment and Protection

Part II:
Situation of children and response
57.89 deaths per 1,000 children under five years of age, globally

17.9% of preschool aged children in developing countries are underweight

29.2% of preschool aged children in developing countries are stunted

66% of the world child population live in the 42 countries affected by crisis

65% of children, under 5 years of age, experience physical and/or psychological violence in the home, in 23 LAMIC

64% of children in developing countries do not have access to ECD programs

50% repeat or drop out of first grade (in some LAMIC)
Attendance to Early Childhood Education

Global Average: All children 20.8% Poorest 9.2% Richest 41.9%
Translating the Science into Practice

- **Nutrition and Health** to feed and nourish the brain during the sensitive periods of development.

- **Stimulation and enrichment** to spark neural connections to increase the brain’s capacity and function.

- **Safety and protection** to buffer against toxic stress.
Thanks, gracias...