

UKRI Action Against Stunting Hub

Education and Cognition Workstream - Practice Toolkit - India



Introduction

What is the purpose of this toolkit?

The purpose of this toolkit is to share engaging, effective activities that adults can do to help children develop their learning.

Who can use this toolkit?

This toolkit can be used by anyone who interacts with young children. Simply playing or talking with a child can make a difference!

What makes this toolkit unique?

The information and activities in this toolkit are specially designed based on research in Anganwadi Centres in India, in collaboration with local and international early childhood experts.

Are the activities aligned with the current Indian guidelines/curriculum?

The activities in the toolkit are aligned with the national early years curriculum and guidelines in India. They can easily fit within your daily programme and can be used across many different types of settings.



Interactive Book Reading

Why is this important?

Helps children's learning and development, language and communication within your daily programme and can be used across many different types of settings.



What activities can we use?

- Introduce the book and use questions and prompts to initiate back and forth conversations with children about the story.
- When you read through the book, ask children questions about elements in the story and give them time to respond.
- Create different questions to prompt children to think and talk about the book.

What you can do!

Use open-ended questions:

- *Use questions that begin with "who", "what", "when", "where" or "why"*
- *'What do you think the story is about?'*
- *'What do you think is happening in this picture here?'*
- *'What do you think will happen next?'*
- *Which characters are most interesting in the story and why?*

Give children time to listen, ask questions and respond.

Recast and **reflect**: Repeat and extend what children say.





Build Positive Relationships

Why is this important?

Supports children's emotional and behavioural development, trust and sense of belonging.



What activities can we use?

- Take time to listen and talk with children.
- Share stories where they have been kind to one another.
- Allow children to be involved in the classroom with tasks such as tidying.

What you can do!

- **Greet** each child warmly as they enter the centre and offer a personal greeting to make children feel comfortable and valued.
- **Acknowledge** child's effort using gestures such as clapping, thumbs up, hugs, and high fives.
- **Use** kind and positive language to help children feel safe and respected, and to set a positive example of good behaviour for children.
- **Celebrate** cultural events and traditions that help children foster a sense of belonging. Ask children to share with the class what activities they did with their family and friends to celebrate their culture and festivals.



Play

Why is this important?

Play has **positive impact** on children's cognitive and emotional development and self-regulation. It **encourages** children's language & communication, creativity and social interaction skills.



What activities can we use?

- **Encourage** children to choose what they would like to do and use materials from the 'play corner' to support their own games and activities.
- **Organise** games, puzzles and activities that children could play with at home with their siblings, parents and families.

What you can do!

- **Create** simple materials e.g. containers to help children learn concepts and give children the freedom to choose what they want to do with the materials.
- **Encourage** pretend play e.g. children to imagine the room is a market, they could be sellers setting up stalls, shoppers etc.



Home Engagement

Why is this important?

Involving and engaging home carers in their children's education helps support children's transition and adapt better to early childhood settings and school.

Home engagement has positive impact on establishing a two-way home and school communication to help children foster a love for learning.



What activities can we use?

- **Encourage** home carers to support children with sharing books, oral traditions, legends, and local folk stories.
- **Initiate** positive conversations and communications with home carers about learning.

What you can do!

- **Conduct** meetings with home carers to build relationships and understand children's home background and communities.
- **Create** volunteering opportunities for home carers to be involved in classroom activities and functions.
- **Plan** dances, recitals, shows, award ceremonies and events for home carers to attend.

NB: Home carers can include older siblings, grandparents or other members; Activities can be applicable for all literacy levels.

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The toolkit is available online:

[UCL IOE Action Against Stunting Hub Early Childhood Education and Cognition Workstream](#)

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