

Template No. 1

Early Childhood Counts

Home and Family-Based Child Care

QUESTIONS	DISCUSSION
CHILDREN SERVED	
What children will be served?	Children in the neighborhood whose mothers work outside the home.
What age group will be served?	There are cross-age groups in the homes. These homes can accommodate children from soon after birth through the early years of primary school.
How many children can be included in one home?	This is somewhat dependent on the ages of the children. There should be no more than two children under the age of two in a group of 8-10 children. The maximum number of children should be 15 from birth to early primary age.
LOGISTICS	
Where will the program take place?	<p>Homes should be chosen that can accommodate the number of children to be included.</p> <p>Appropriate homes have adequate space for children to play indoors and outdoors, access to safe water and a latrine. They are safe, they have light and ventilation.</p> <p>Loans can be provided to families to upgrade their homes (e.g., to add a toilet, add running water, expand a kitchen area, clear space in the yard for outdoor play, etc.)</p>
Can homes be used on a rotating basis?	Yes. Several homes can be used for child care. A set of materials can be rotated on a periodic (e.g., monthly) basis among 4-5 homes. Rotation places less demand on a single woman and provides for a sharing of the child care.

TEACHER/FACILITATOR

Who will be the day care home mother?

In choosing the home you are also choosing the mother. She needs to be someone who loves children, who enjoys working with them, someone who is willing to be trained, and someone who has the respect of other women in the community.

What kind of training will she be given?
Initially?

Women will need training in health, nutrition and stimulation. Content should be based on local childrearing practices. There should be a focus on prevention in terms of nutrition and health care, but mothers should also be trained in terms of curative practices they can administer and they should know when to refer children for services. (Minimum of 40 hours of preservice training; 80 hours is preferable. The content and process of training are more important than the number of hours offered.)

In-service?

Refresher courses should focus on expanding the mother's repertoire in terms of activities to stimulate children's development. One-day refresher courses should be offered every three months ideally (every six months minimum).

Who will supervise the mother?

During the initial months supervision should happen monthly. Over time this can shift to every three months. The Supervisor should focus on enhancing the mother's skills and knowledge, not making judgments.

CURRICULUM

What do we want children to learn?
What kind of experience do we want them to have?

Children need to be in a safe, clean environment where they have opportunities to explore a variety of materials, where there are things to play with, and a caring adult with whom they can interact.

Activities should include things which promote large muscle development, small muscle development, social skills, problem-solving, art, drama, pre-reading and pre-writing skills.

Nutrition should be a part of the program, with the minimum being the provision of a nutritious snack, depending on the hours of operation of the program.

What materials should be supplied by the project?

Basic equipment should be made available. This will include eating utensils, sleeping mats/cots, a place for each child to keep personal things, outdoor playthings and indoor playthings, and materials.

Many of the materials that children need can be made from 'throw-aways' and things found in the environment. Much of the equipment (tables, chairs, toys, games) can frequently be made by parents.

Survey the local community before ordering expensive equipment from outside.

DAILY SCHEDULE

What hours will the center be open?	This should be determined by the needs of the parents and the needs of the provider.
What days of the week will it function?	Programs do not need to operate daily. Again, this should be determined by the parents and the provider. In the same community there may be more than one day care home, each with a different daily schedule.
What months of the year will it be open?	This needs to be determined based on climate and seasonal work schedules.
What allowances will be made for seasonal variations?	If there are periods of drought or monsoon or harvest times, these may all affect the operation of the homes. Be flexible!
What will the child's day look like?	A daily schedule should be developed. Children should follow the same basic routine everyday. This provides them with security.

EVALUATION

How will we know if the program is enhancing children's well-being?	Periodic health checks. Monitoring of children's growth. Assessment of all areas of development if possible, with assistance from appropriate professionals.
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