



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PACKAGE

1. INTRODUCTION

The centrality of Early Childhood Development to the developmental initiatives to which the Government of the Republic of South Africa is a party (such as the MDGs goals) is founded on an ever-growing body of evidence which confirms that a nation's development depends on the extent to which it can unlock the potential human capital inherent within its very youngest population. This in turn depends on the extent to which government secures or provides the conditions necessary for the realisation of the right of every infant and child to develop 'his or her potential to the maximum extent possible, to become physically healthy, mentally alert, socially competent, emotionally sound and ready to learn - cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically and psychosocially – to their full potential

The realisation of these rights is dependent on the quality of the biological, social and economic environment in which the foetus, infant and young child develops, especially whilst in utero and in the first two years after birth – a period commonly referred to as the '1st 1,000 days'. If the foundational development of the brain and skills is flawed in these earliest days, later developments that build on earlier circuits and skills will be inherently limited. The first 1,000 days thus offer a unique and invaluable window of opportunity to secure the optimal development of the child, and by extension, the positive developmental trajectory of a country.

ECD Programmes are offered at centre based and non-centre based levels. The non- centre based include programmes such as toy libraries, mobile ECD and child minding programmes. Even though the second level is unpopular, it still offers similar programmes provided within centre based level.

2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

To increase number of children 0 – 5 years accessing ECD programmes and partial care to 230 000 by 2016/17.

3. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Chapter 2 of the Children's Act 38/ 2005, outlines principles and values that are to be adhered to when dealing with children, irrespective of their age:

- ✓ Respect, protect, promote and fulfil the child's rights set out in the Bill of Rights and the best interests of the child standard set out in section 7.
- ✓ Respect the child's inherent dignity
- ✓ treat the child fairly and equitably
- ✓ protect the child from unfair discrimination on any ground, including on the grounds of the health status or

- disability of the child or a family member of the child
- ✓ recognise a child's need for development and to engage in play and other recreational activities appropriate to the child's age
- ✓ recognise a child's disability and create an enabling environment to respond to the special needs that the child has
- ✓ If it is in the best interests of the child, the child's family must be given the opportunity to express their views in any matter concerning the child
- ✓ In any matter concerning a child-
 - (a) an approach which is conducive to conciliation and problem-solving should be followed and a confrontational approach should be avoided; and
 - (b) a delay in any action or decision to be taken must be avoided as far as possible
- ✓ A child, having regard to his or her age, maturity and stage of development, and a person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of that child, where appropriate, must be informed of any action or decision taken in a matter concerning the child which significantly affects the child.

4. DEFINITION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The process of emotional, cognitive, sensory, spiritual, moral, physical, social and communication development of children from birth to school-going age. ECD programmes are intended to promote learning and provide support appropriate to the child's developmental needs.

5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES

International instruments

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- African Charter on the Rights of the Child

National instruments

- Constitution of Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996
- Children's Act 38/2005 as Amended
- Non-Profit Organizations Act, 71 /1997
- Public Finance Management Act 1/1999 as amended
- National Integrated Plan for ECD (NIP) 2006
- Guidelines for Early Childhood Development Services 2005
- Partial Care Strategy 2010
- Provincial Integrated ECD Strategy 2010
- Draft National ECD Policy 2013

6. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

There are registration requirements for the ECD programme, which are in line with the minimum Norms and standards for children, as outlined in the Children's Act 38/ 2005, as amended, and as follows:

- ✚ The facility should be looking after children six in number and more
- ✚ Completed application: 'Form 11'
- ✚ Health report recommending structural suitability and safety

- ✚ Developmental daily programme for the children
- ✚ Menu signed by the dietician
- ✚ Staff composition and qualifications
- ✚ Confirmation that all staff have been screened against Part 'B' – Chapter 7 of the Children's Act 38/ 2005
- ✚ Constitution of the NPO
- ✚ NPO Compliance letter
- ✚ Site occupation letter
- ✚ Emergency plan which includes the first aid kit and fire extinguisher
- ✚ Required registers and guidelines
- ✚ Number of children accessing the ECD programme
- ✚ Children's individual files containing required documents (admission form, child's birth certificate, immunisation booklet, parents' ID documents and contact details, profiles and reports)
- ✚ Outdoor and indoor equipment, including tables and chairs

7. SERVICES OFFERED WITHIN ECD PROGRAMME

Early Childhood Development programmes provide education and care to children during the day and programmes as follows:

Physical and motor development

- Provision of meals (balanced diet)
- Health care (first aid, referral to health professionals, personal hygiene, administration of medicine) – shows general good health
- Development of gross motor skills e.g, drawing, cutting, colouring, painting – coordinates small and large muscles and demonstrates eye- hand coordination
- Playing with outdoor toys e.g jungle gyms, swings, climbing, running

Social development

- Poems
- Playing with indoor toys e.g, puzzles, building blocks
- Cultural activities

Emotional development

- Fantasy games
- Toilet routine

Numeracy development

- Number operations and concepts
- Patterns
- Space and shapes (geometry)
- Measurements

Language development

- Oral (listening and speaking)
- Pre-reading
- Pre-writing

Moral and spiritual development

- Values and norms (respect, integrity, love)

8. INDICATORS OF THE PROGRAMME

Indicators for the programme as outlined in the 2014/15 APP and Operational Plan are as follows:

- Number of ECD sites registered
- Number of children 0 -5 years accessing the registered ECD Programme
- Number of ECD centres constructed
- Number of mobile ECD programme established
- Number of children in funded ECD Programme
- Number of ECD Programmes in ECD sites registered
- Number of children benefitting from the R15 subsidy
- Number of ECD Practitioners in ECD sites
- Number of ECD centres re-registered
- Number of officials and stakeholders capacitated on ECD legislation
- Number of ECD personnel screened against Part 'B'- Chapter 7 of the Children's Act
- Number of ECD task team meetings held

9. TARGET GROUP

The target group for the programme is children birth to five years.

10. CONCLUSION

Provisioning and delivery of ECD services in South Africa requires significant transformation to ensure that the Government meets its considerable responsibility and obligation to vulnerable young children and families in particular and to the broader population in general. Addressing the underlying factors that are prohibiting the effective delivery of holistic ECD services is the key. The Draft National ECD Policy has set in place directives and requirements to develop a comprehensive and all-inclusive legislative framework; provide adequate public funding and resourcing; and establish a management and coordination system to enable effective governance, institutional arrangements, leadership and coordination.