

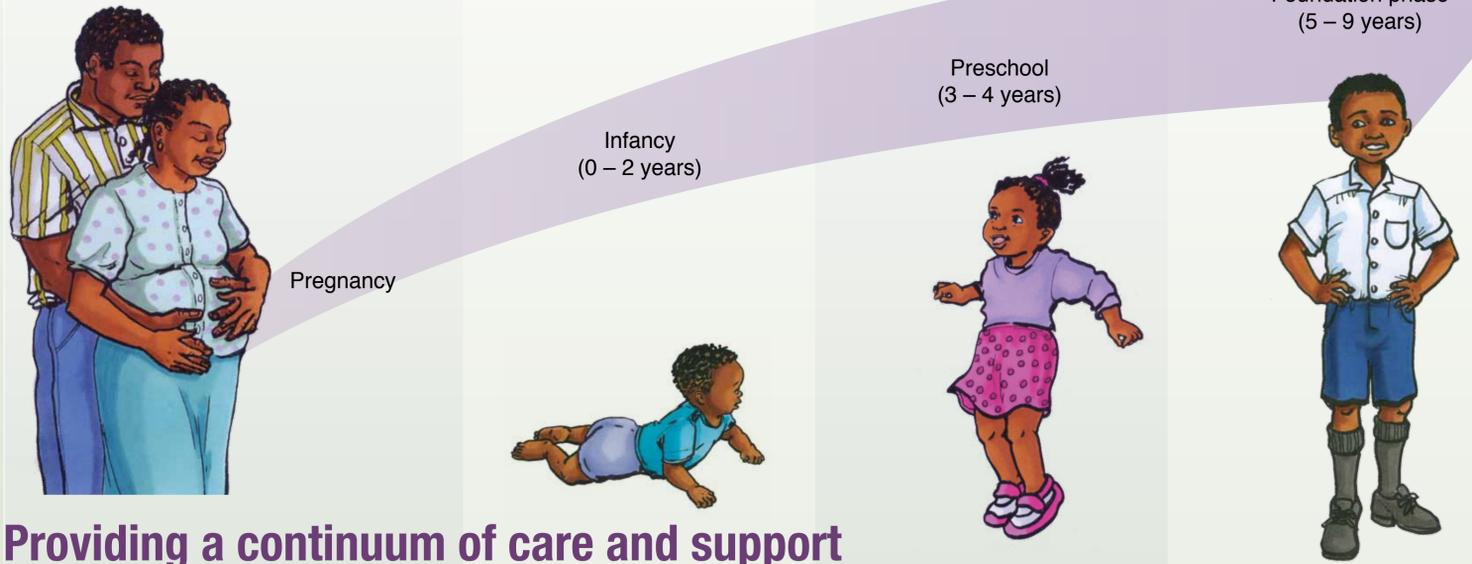
Stepping up national development: Prioritising essential services for young children

Why prioritise services for young children?

- The first 1,000 days of life is a sensitive and rapid period of development. It lays the foundation for good health and social, emotional and intellectual development. To ensure good outcomes in childhood and later life, it is vital to invest time, energy and resources in early childhood.
- Early childhood development services protect young children from the adverse effects of poverty, violence and neglect. It is vital that these essential services reach all children and families, particularly those most in need.

What do young children and families need?

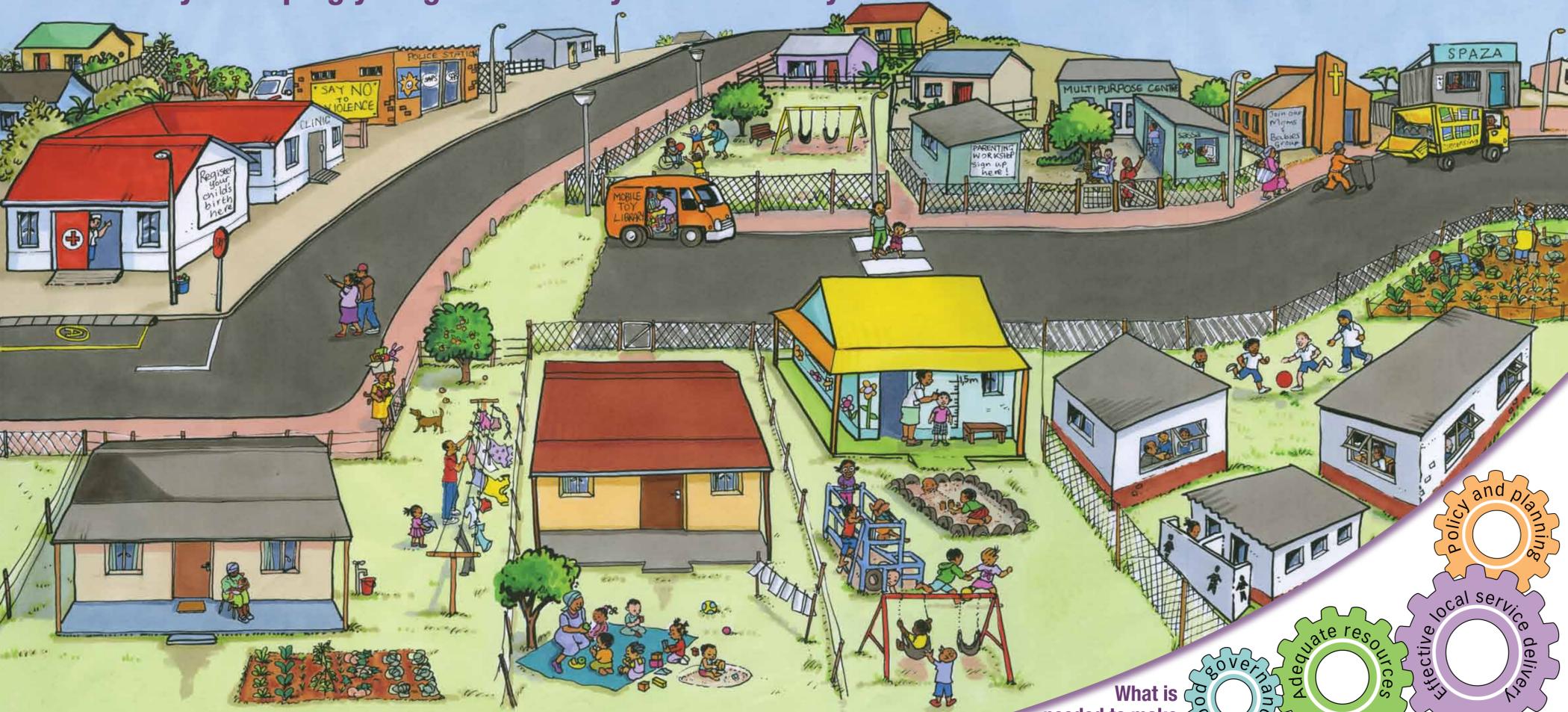
- Early childhood development starts at home, where the love, warmth and involvement of parents and caregivers help foster young children's health, growth and well-being.
- Young children also need health services, good nutrition, early stimulation, social services and support for their caregivers.
- Children and families need different kinds of support at different stages of a child's development – starting from conception through to the early years of schooling.
- These services need to reach caregivers and children where they are, for example, through clinics, homes, playgroups, ECD centres, multipurpose centres and schools.



Providing a continuum of care and support

	Pregnancy	0 – 2 years	3 – 4 years	5 – 9 years
Health	Early antenatal care	Postnatal care		School health services (health promotion, screening and referrals)
	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission	Routine immunisation		
	Birth preparation	Screening for developmental delay		
	Mental health screening and prevention of substance abuse	Integrated management of childhood illnesses		
Nutrition	Micronutrient supplements	Exclusive breastfeeding promotion (0 – 6 months) and optimal feeding support		School feeding programme
	Prevention of low birth weight	Growth monitoring and treatment of severe malnutrition		Nutrition education
Caregiver support	Maternity and family responsibility leave	Child care services for working or work-seeking caregivers		
	Preparation for parenting	Parenting education and support programmes		
Early learning	Protective and supportive environment	Safe, stable, nurturing environment and responsive care		Care and support services to address barriers to learning
		Access to toys and books		
		Early stimulation (caregivers touch, talk, listen and respond to children)	Group programmes to develop social skills	Opportunities to develop early literacy and mathematics skills
Social grants and services	Access to social services to prevent and address risk factors	Early birth registration and access to social grants		
		Prevention and early intervention programmes Child protection services and psycho-social support		

How are you helping young children in your community?



What is needed to make these services work?

