

HSRC SEMINAR SERIES

PROGRAMME

WEBINAR ACCESS ONLY

Is COVID-19 threatening breastfeeding and early childhood development?

Date: 18 August 2020 Time: 12h30 –14h00

Livestream via Zoom

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SACSoWACH ECD Lead

A few reflections

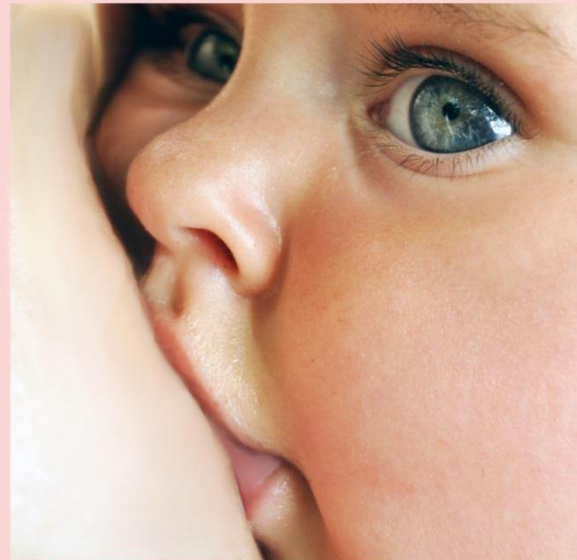
- The importance of breastfeeding for early childhood development
- Using the Nurturing Care Framework, what are the additional benefits that breastfeeding poses to child development and learning, responsive caregiving and building healthy social relationships.
- Why is continued promotion, protection and support for breastfeeding during the current pandemic essential for infants (and mothers) in the short- and long-term.



"...one could argue that we have vastly undersold breastfeeding by focusing primarily on its nutritional and immunological properties."

Lauren Wilson (2014)

Breast Milk



Nature's Very Own Original and Most Powerful Holistic and Alternative Medicine
www.facebook.com/montereybayholistic

BREASTFEEDING



THIRST:

Babies ask to breastfeed when they are thirsty.

HUNGER:

Babies ask to breastfeed when they are hungry.

LOVE:

Babies ask to breastfeed if they feel the need for comfort, affection, and eye contact.

RELAXATION:

Babies ask to breastfeed to help them relax, wind down, or sleep.

DEVELOPMENT & IMMUNITIES:

Babies ask to breastfeed if they need the milk's components to grow, thrive, protect their intestinal and immune systems, or recover from illness.

It's not just about the milk!



Thirst &
Hunger



Love &
Affection

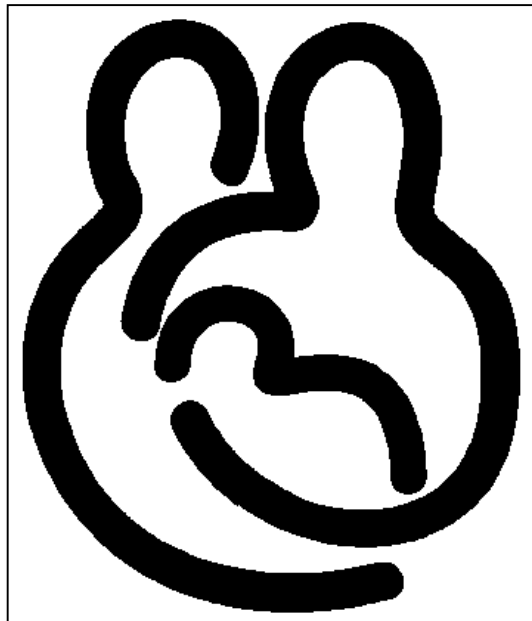


Immune
Defense

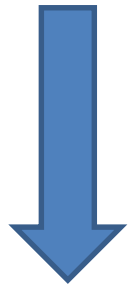
More reasons to breastfeed

Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development.

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2004). Young children develop in an environment of relationships. Working Paper No. 1. Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.net>



*Breastfeeding
(skin to skin
contact)*



The basis for
building
healthy
relationships



Infant: The act of breastfeeding influences the development of the hippocampus (emotion control centre) – HPA axis – mediate stress response. More skin-to-skin ~ better ability to respond to stress later



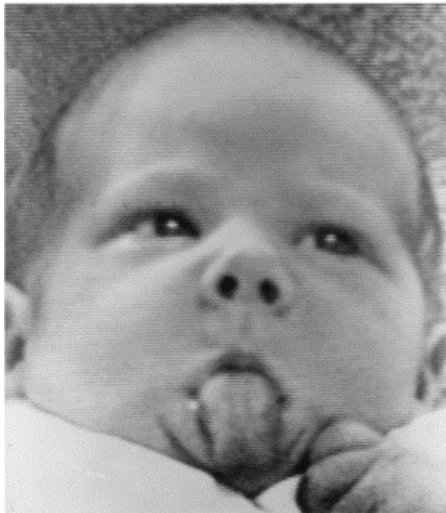
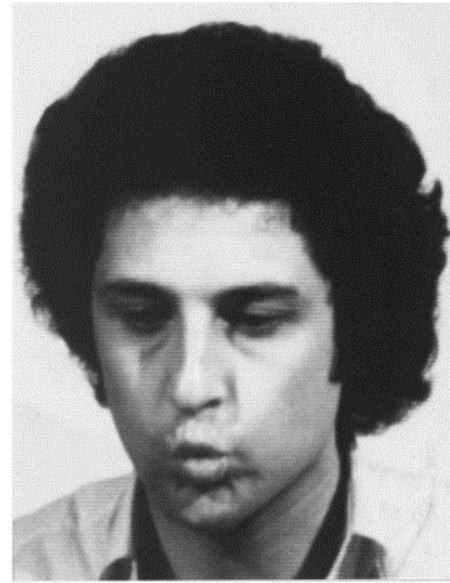
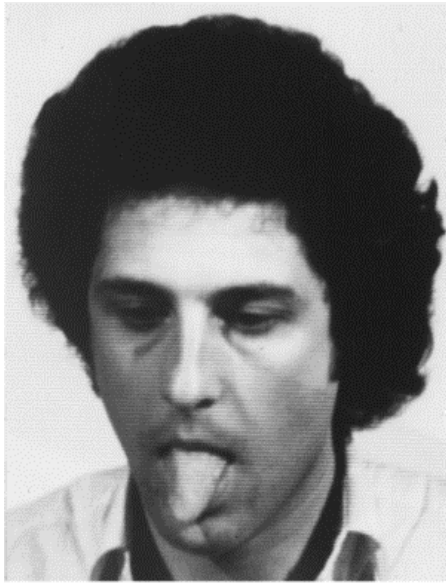
Healthy positive interactions between infants and caretakers have a two generational effect.

Strong early attachment and interactions between infant and caregiver stimulate the release of oxytocin. This critically important hormone produces both neural and behavioural effects in the child and the mother, and the effects are interrelated. In mothers, oxytocin may encourage longer breastfeeding, which supports better nutrition and therefore better brain development. And breastfeeding also provides stimulation and nurturing, further strengthening the bond between child and caretaker — all of which support healthy brain development.



Mother: The process of a baby suckling at the breast actually forges new neurochemical pathways in the mother's brain that create and reinforce maternal behaviour. This process is aided by chemical imprinting and huge increases in oxytocin. This hormonal cascade makes mom want to respond to her baby and helps her to interpret his needs effectively (Rapley and Murkett 2012).







- **Foundation for learning**
- **Safe and secure base for exploration**
- **Mother-child interaction**



Responsive care and early learning opportunities from birth



NURTURING CARE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



Nurturing Care is what the infant's brain expects and depends upon for healthy development

Survive, Thrive, Transform

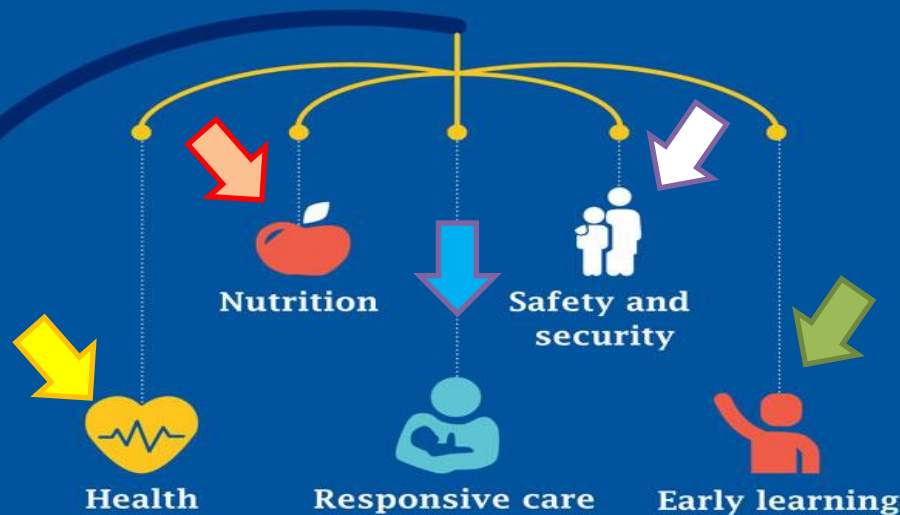
Early childhood development is seen by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as central to the transformation that the world aims to achieve by 2030.



Every young child deserves to thrive

A child's brain develops fastest in the first 2-3 years

Nurturing Care:



The Foundation for Children's Development

Cost of Inaction

About 250 million children under 5 are at risk of not reaching their full potential

About 25% reduction in average adult earning potential

Countries may lose up to 2 or 3 fold what they now invest in health or education

Early childhood development pays off

Better health and learning capacity

Increased adult earning

Poverty reduction

Fewer inequalities

More peaceful societies

Nurturing care means supporting parents and caregivers to:

Breastfeed and provide nutritious food

Maintain good health during conception, pregnancy and in the postnatal period

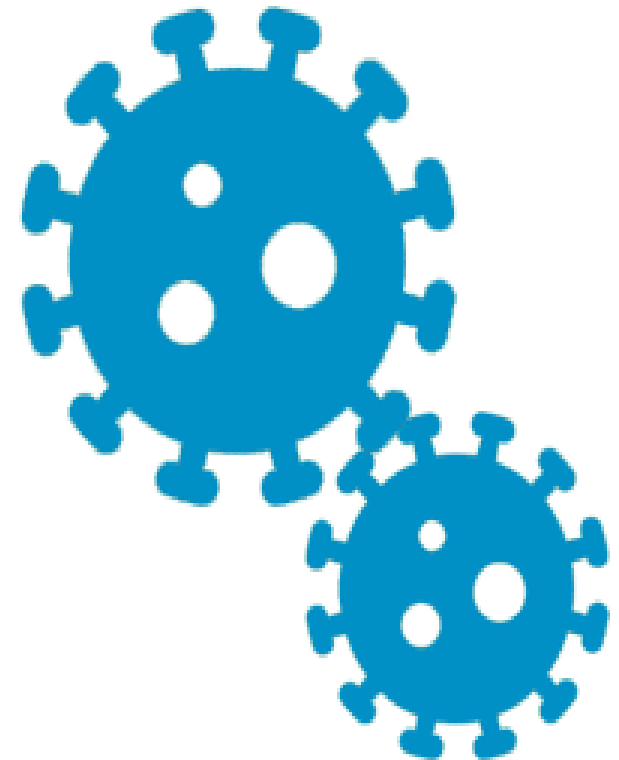
Provide a nurturing and safe environment

Give their children opportunities to explore and learn

Nurturing care refers to conditions created by public policies, programmes and services. These conditions enable communities and caregivers to ensure children's good health and nutrition, and protect them from threats. Nurturing care also means giving young children opportunities for early learning, through interactions that are responsive and emotionally supportive.

- ***Nurturing care starts before birth*** - when mothers and other caregivers can start talking and singing to the foetus.
- By the end of the second trimester of pregnancy, the growing foetus can hear. From birth, the baby can recognize the mother's voice.
- Early bonding is facilitated by skin-to-skin contact, breastfeeding and the presence of a companion to support the mother and build the foundations for optimal nutrition, quality interactions and care.
- Soon after birth, babies respond to faces, gentle touch and holding, as well as the soothing sound of baby talk. Caregivers soon learn to appreciate how babies respond to them, which is essential for the optimal development of the baby's rapidly growing brain.

The principles remain the same....



**EARLY AND CONSTANT
CONTACT BETWEEN
PARENTS AND THEIR
NEWBORNS HELPS
BABIES TO SURVIVE
AND THRIVE.**



**THE QUALITY OF CARE BABIES RECEIVE
AFFECTS THEIR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND
HAS LASTING IMPACTS ON THEIR HEALTH.**



**LET'S ENSURE NURTURING CARE
FOR EVERY SMALL AND SICK BABY.**



Close contact and early, exclusive breastfeeding helps a baby to thrive.

A woman with COVID-19 should be supported to breastfeed safely, hold her newborn skin-to-skin, and share a room with her baby.



Women with COVID-19 can **breastfeed** if they wish to do so. They should:



Practice respiratory hygiene and wear a mask



Wash hands before and after touching the baby



Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces



LIMITING THE TIME A
NEWBORN IS SEPARATED
FROM THEIR MOTHER
HELPS THE BABY
GROW AND DEVELOP.

**DEFAULT POSITION =
ZERO SEPARATION**

*Also important for
hospitalised children
especially at this time*

*If the mother is too ill to
breastfeed or be with the
baby? What are the
alternatives?*

COVID-19

Zero separation. Together for better care!

Keep preterm and sick babies close to their parents.

#TogetherForBetterCare
#ZeroSeparation



Maternal and newborn health services, including small and sick newborn care, remain core essential services during the pandemic. The COVID-19 response is already impacting availability, accessibility and quality of health services for pregnant women and newborns. The full impact of COVID-19 on maternal and newborn health is uncertain. Even a modest decline of 10% in coverage of pregnancy related and newborn health care would result in an additional 28,000 maternal deaths and 168,000 newborn deaths.

World Health Organization
www.who.int/publications-detail/10665-332240

In summary

- Regardless of COVID-19 status, mothers and infants should remain together, breastfeed, practice skin-to-skin contact and kangaroo mother care, and rooming-in day and night while applying necessary infection prevention and control measures.
- From the available evidence, mothers should be counselled that the benefits of breastfeeding substantially outweigh the potential risks of transmission.



Road to Health

IMPORTANT: Always bring this book when you visit any clinic, doctor, or hospital.



Nutrition



Love



Protection



Healthcare



Extra Care



Child's name:

Date of birth:

Gender:



Side-by-Side

on the road to health



NUTRITION Good nutrition is important for you and your child to grow and be healthy. It starts with breastfeeding.



LOVE Your child learns from looking at you when you hold them close to you and love, play and talk to them.



PROTECTION Your child can be protected from disease and injury by getting immunised and by playing in safe places.



HEALTHCARE Your child needs help from you or a health worker when they are sick or injured.



EXTRA CARE Your child may need special care or support and knowing what to do and where to go will help both of you.



9 Is it advisable for a mother with confirmed/suspected COVID-19 or any other respiratory infections who is breastfeeding, to give a 'top-up' with infant formula milk?

- No. If a mother is breastfeeding, there is no need to provide a 'top-up' with an infant formula milk.
- Giving a 'top-up' will reduce the amount of breastmilk produced by a mother.
- Mothers who are worried about not having enough breastmilk should:
 - Make sure that their baby is positioned and attached effectively on the breast.
 - Seek additional practical help from a health worker or a lactation consultant to ensure that their baby is attached efficiently.

- Respond to their infants' hunger and feeding cues and breastfeed their baby as much as the baby wants.

10 Are health facilities or other organizations allowed to accept free supplies of formula milk for infants to distribute to mothers during disaster / emergency situations like in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?

- No. Donations of infant formula should not be sought or accepted. If needed, supplies should be purchased based on assessed need through the normal procurement systems.
- Acceptance of donated formula is a violation of the Regulations Relating to Foodstuffs for Infants and Young Children (R991).
- Acceptance of donations can undermine breastfeeding.
- In the long run, mothers and their infants become dependent on breastmilk substitutes and may not be able to afford to purchase them once the donations stop. Mothers/care givers then over dilute infant formula or using inappropriate alternatives which can be dangerous and lead to malnutrition.

For more information:

www.facebook.com/SidebySideSA/ www.sidebyside.co.za

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A long and Healthy life for all South Africans



What you need to know about breastfeeding and COVID -19: "For mothers, pregnant women & health workers"

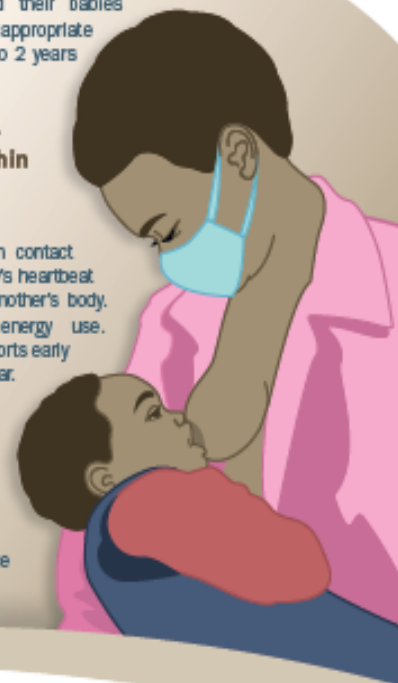
1 Why is breastfeeding important during emergencies like COVID-19 pandemic?

Breastfeeding is the best way to provide your baby with optimal nutrition, and to protect your baby from illness. Breastfeeding strengthens the baby's immune system by directly transferring antibodies from the mother. Mothers should breastfeed their babies exclusively for 6 months and thereafter provide them with appropriate complementary foods, with continued breastfeeding for up to 2 years of age or beyond.

2 Why should a baby still be placed skin-to-skin immediately and breastfed within the first hour after birth – even in emergencies?

There are many benefits of skin-to-skin contact. Skin-to-skin contact calms the mother and the baby and helps to stabilize the baby's heartbeat and breathing. It keeps the baby warm with heat from the mother's body. It reduces infant crying, thus reducing stress and energy use. It facilitates bonding between the mother and her baby and supports early initiation of breastfeeding thus normalizing the baby's blood sugar.

- Immediate and continued skin-to-skin care, including kangaroo mother care, and keeping the baby warm, is linked with fewer newborn deaths.
- Placing the newborn close to the mother also enables early initiation of breastfeeding which helps the baby receive colostrum, which is protective against illness, UNLESS if the newborn or the mother is too ill to practice skin-to-skin contact.



A long and Healthy life for all South Africans





FACEBOOK



WEBSITE
<https://sidebyside.co.za/>



<https://messagesformothers.co.za/>



South African Breastmilk Reserve
Bringing milk to babies, safely

Breastfeeding Dialogue Programme

Thur 6 Aug 2020

Globally, World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated annually from 1-7 August to raise awareness and galvanize action to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. This year's theme, #WBAW2020 will focus on the home and social environment¹. Sadly, despite all the health and social benefits of breastfeeding, South Africa has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates globally².

Why is this?

Women in general, face a very hostile social environment in South Africa, even more so now during the covid-19 pandemic. Almost one in two households in South Africa is a female-headed household and approximately 9 million children live in fatherless homes³. This puts an added burden on women and most often mothers to economically provide for essentials like food, transport and health care. Not breastfeeding implies a reliance on other infant feeding foods, most often commercial and expensive. This inadvertently leads to inappropriate infant feeding with the introduction of other foods before the age of six months. The World Health Organization and the National Department of Health recommends and promotes exclusive breastfeeding for all infants for the first six months of life⁴. In the era of life-long antiretroviral treatment for HIV, all women can now safely breastfeed their infants. Infants under six months, do not need anything else but breastmilk.



¹ WABA (2020) World Breastfeeding Week 2020. <https://worldbreastfeedingweek.org>
² National Department of Health (NDOH), Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), and ICF (2018) South Africa Demographic and Health Survey 2018: Key Findings. Pretoria, South Africa, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: MRC, Stats SA, SAMRC, and ICF.
³ Selwan, L. and Oberle, C. (2018) African fathers' socio-economic status and perceptions of fatherhood as related to developmental challenges faced by children in South Africa.
⁴ National Department of Health (2011) Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy. Pretoria: NDOH



Format of the dialogue session - breastfeeding imbizo

Discussions facilitated by: Chantell Witten (University of the Free State)

10:00 – 10:10	Introduction by moderator and explanation of the format of the dialogue and Introduction to SACSoWACH Chair	Chantell Witten
10:10 – 10:20	Introduction to SACSoWACH	Precious Robinson
10:20-10:30	What social and psychological environments are needed for optimal health and wellbeing of mothers and their children	Wiedaad Stemming
10:30-10:40	Wendy Somlavi, mother and community activist Pumla Dlamini, mother and child nutrition specialist share their child-rearing stories with us	Wendy Somlavi and Pumla Dlamini
10:40-10:50	Responses from Stella Jordan, mother and breastfeeding activist for the South African Breastmilk Reserve on issues of hostile social and work environments	Stella Jordan
10:50-11:00	Patrick Shivuri, father and Child Health Programme Manager with Save the Children and Sibusiso Fihlani speak to the role of fathers and men in supporting child care and breastfeeding	Patrick Shivuri Precious Robinson
11:00 – 11:20	Questions from the audience or the live stream, Chantell to direct to panel members	Guided by the incoming questions
11:20 – 11:25	Covid-19 has introduced additional burdens for mothers and their new babies let's hear from a few mothers about their experiences	Chantell Witten
11:25 – 11:35	Mother 1 and 2 share their experiences with the audience	Mother 1 and 2
11:35 – 11:45	Response from Dr Bagus, medical doctor and Le Leche League Leader	Rhemat Bagus
11:45 – 11:55	Closing address by Dr Motesape, medical doctor and patron of SACSoWACH	Dr Tshapo Motesape
11:55 – 12:00	Thanking of participants and closing of the dialogue	Chantell Witten
THE END		

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iM02sG1PR8s>