

GROWTH is greatly dependent on **FOOD**, which should be

- adequate in terms of calories and nutrients
- varied and attractive to the taste
- balanced in terms of nutrition
- clean and hygienically prepared

In addition, freedom from infection and illness, and an atmosphere of love and security are essential for healthy growth

DEVELOPMENT is an all-round and complex process which needs a multi-faceted and stimulating **PROGRAMME** for the children. This means

- adequate supply of low-cost, locally available, simple play materials and equipment
- an interesting, varied and balanced programme of play activities
- basic health services of check up and referral
- guidance through interaction with caring, trained and interested adults

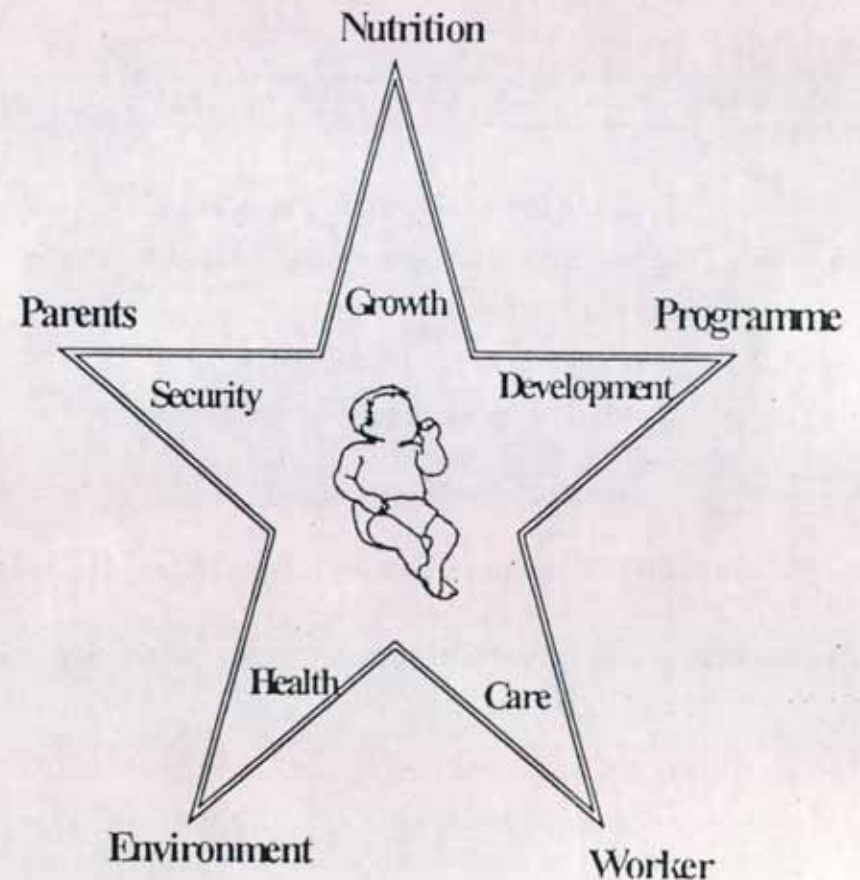
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Decentralisation of Child Care Services in Tamil Nadu

What is "good" child care centre?



A "good" child care centre must do the following

-  meet the needs of children for all-round holistic growth and development
-  meet the needs of working parents for a safe, healthy and suitable environment for the care of their children
-  meet the needs of the community for an accessible, cost-effective, affordable facility.

The five points of the STAR can sum up what is needed

- ◆ SECURITY is the main concern of the PARENTS
- ◆ HEALTH can be assured by the ENVIRONMENT
- ◆ CARE AND NURTURE is provided by the WORKER
- ◆ GROWTH is supported by the NUTRITION
- ◆ DEVELOPMENT is fostered by the PROGRAMME

Let us see what these actually mean

SECURITY - the need of the PARENTS implies

- location, easily accessible (near the residential area, or workplace of the mothers, or near the school)
- environmentally safe and free from hazards, protected
- timings, suitable for the parents, linked to the work timings of the mothers and / or the school timings of siblings

HEALTH - the outcome of the INFRASTRUCTURE / ENVIRONMENT, means

- adequate space, indoors and outdoors
- fresh and clean air, sunlight
- simple, clean and well-maintained buildings
- drinking water, toilets and cooking facilities
- adequate equipment for storage, hygiene and children's activity

CARE / NURTURE - the human component is provided by the WORKER

The workers must

- be enough for the number of children in the centre, that is, in a suitable adult-child ratio
- be local persons who can easily reach the centre and are known to the community
- have adequate training and skills
- be loving and kindly and enjoy being with children
- be adequately paid and with satisfactory working conditions