

Supporting Families Psychosocially



Thinking about South Africa

- The drums of war are the drums of hunger

South African proverb

- If you don't stand for something, you will fall for something

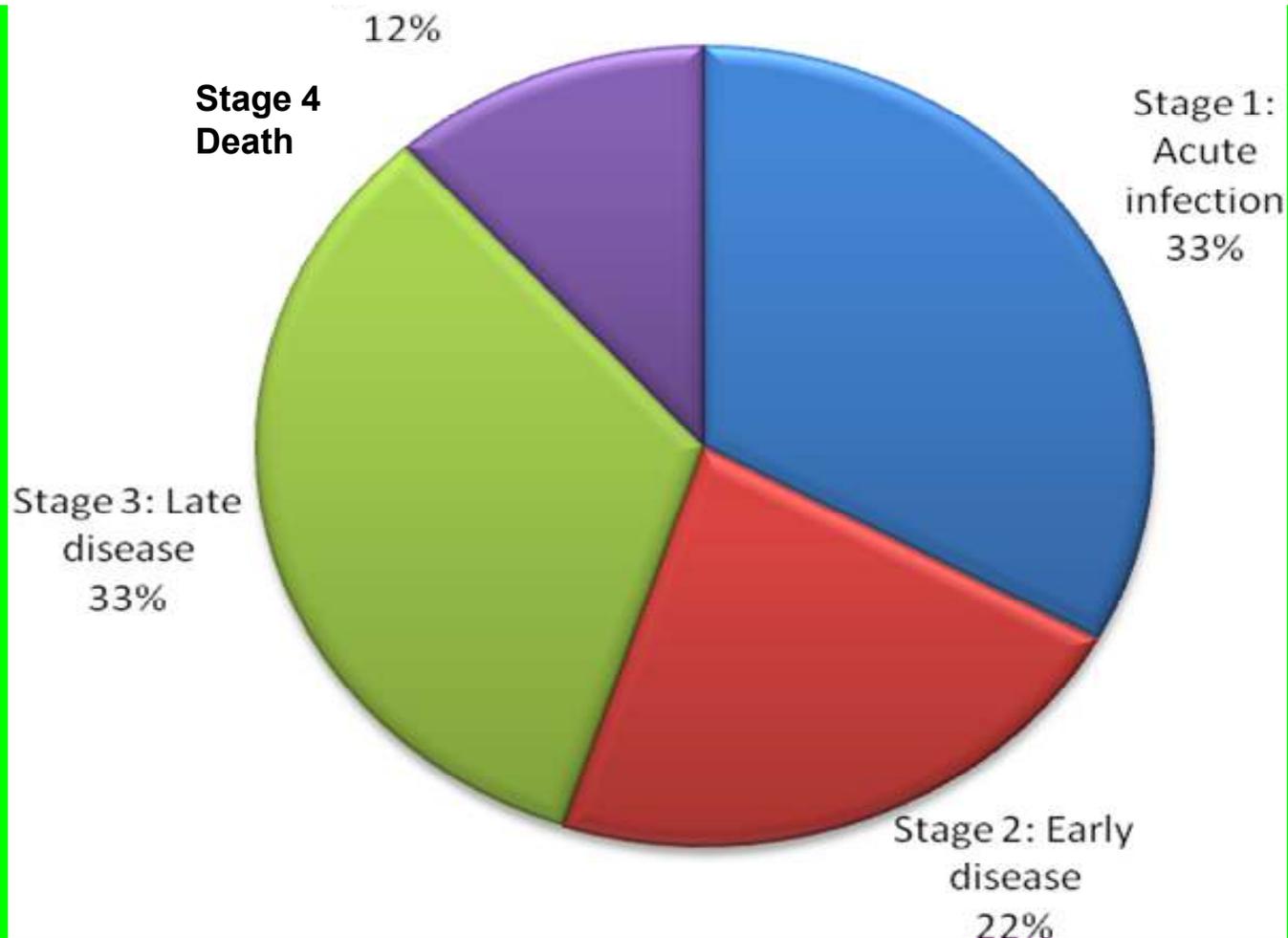
African proverb.

- Like a turtle, every man should stick out his neck if he wants to go forward

Ghanaian proverb

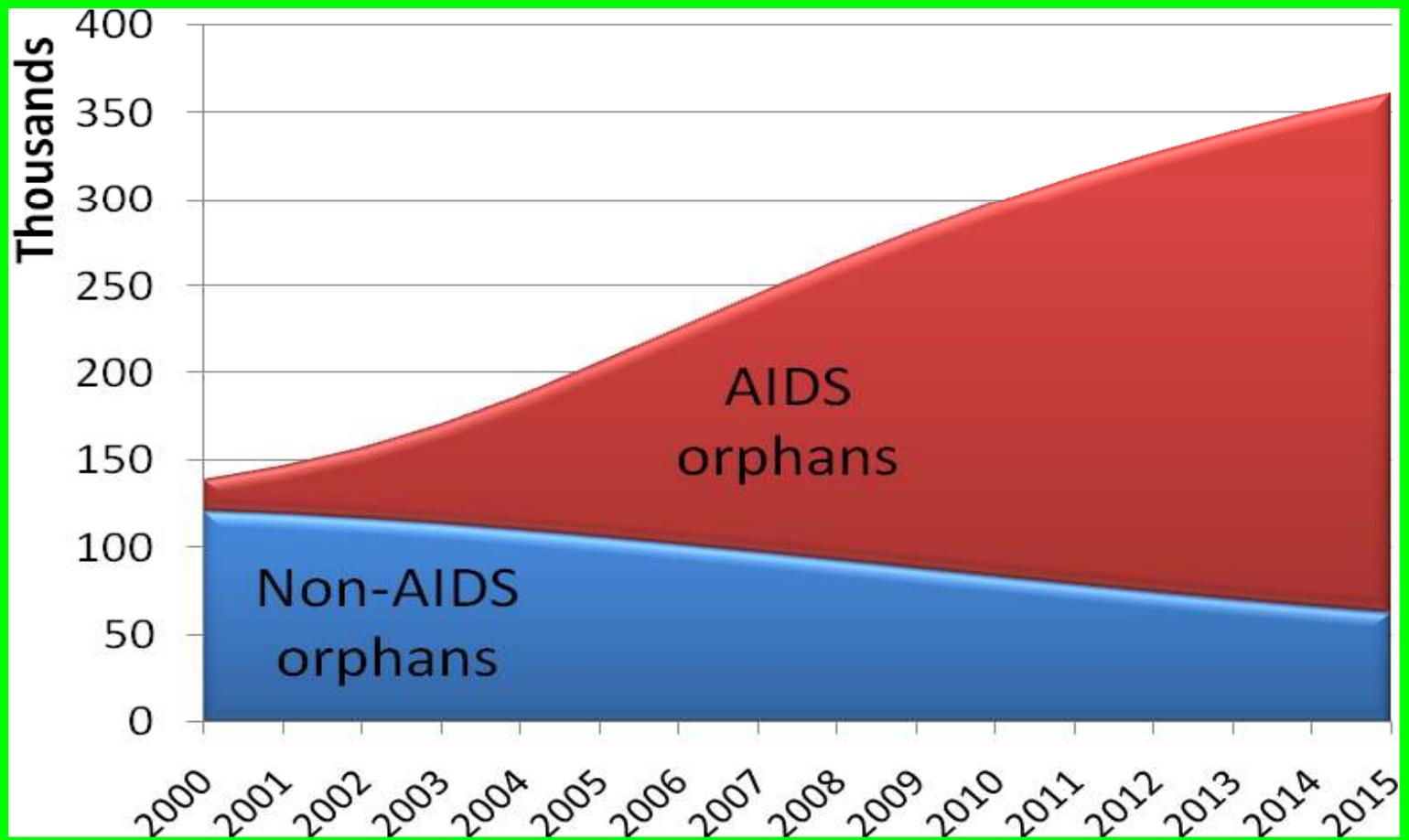
Thinking about HIV/AIDS deaths

Figure 2: Stages of HIV infection in Eastern Cape adults



Orphans

Figure 3: Projected orphanhood in the Eastern Cape, 2000 to 2015



Thinking about families

I want to argue that we put the family at the centre of poverty eradication both as service provider and recipient.

As government, NGO's, business and researchers, let us empower the family to be the first site against poverty and especially against inter-generational poverty.

We need you as partners to do this, to get families and ward committees as our agents of change.

Slow emergence of social development policy

- **services that are family orientated, community-based and integrated.**
- **integrity and well-being of the person within the social context of the family and community.**
- **family preservation and family reconstruction services**
- **the delivery of integrated services to communities, families and individuals affected by social vulnerability and marginalisation**
 - *Service Delivery Model For Developmental Social Services 2005*

Thinking about systems for families

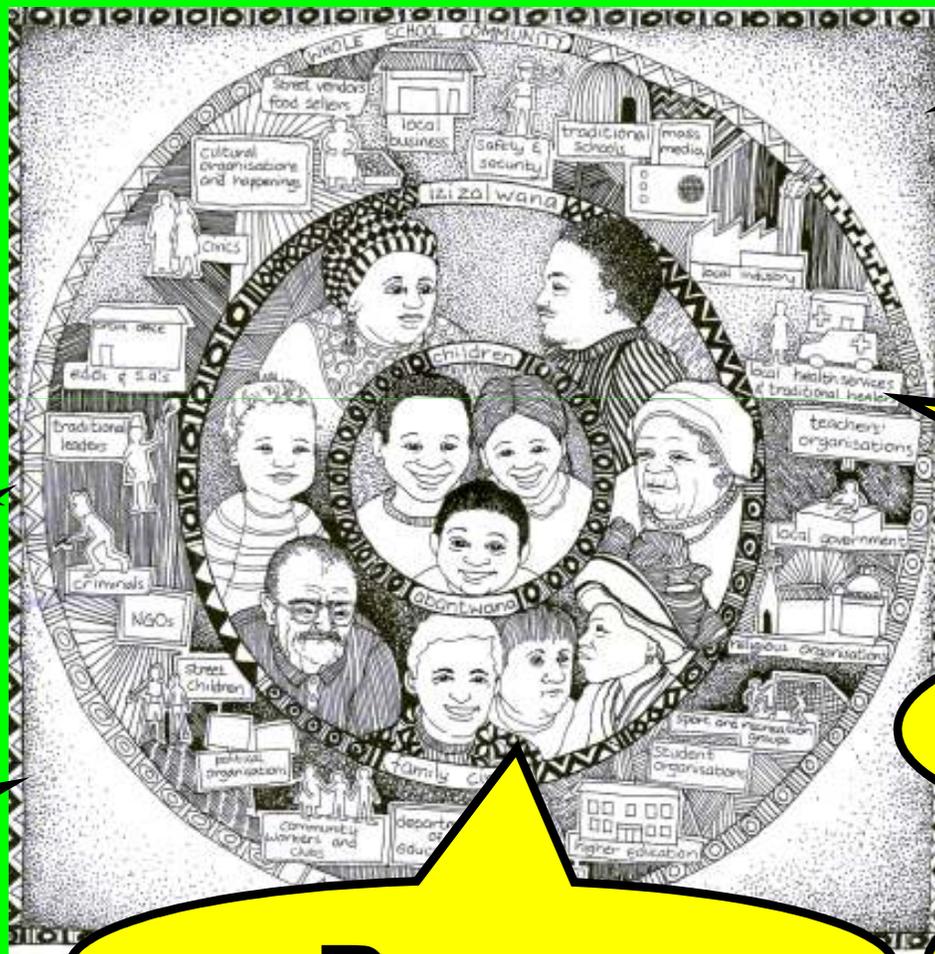
Identifying households

Health

Nutrition

Hygiene

Safety & security



Housing

Education

Learning

Livelihoods

Fathers

Peace

Thinking about brain development

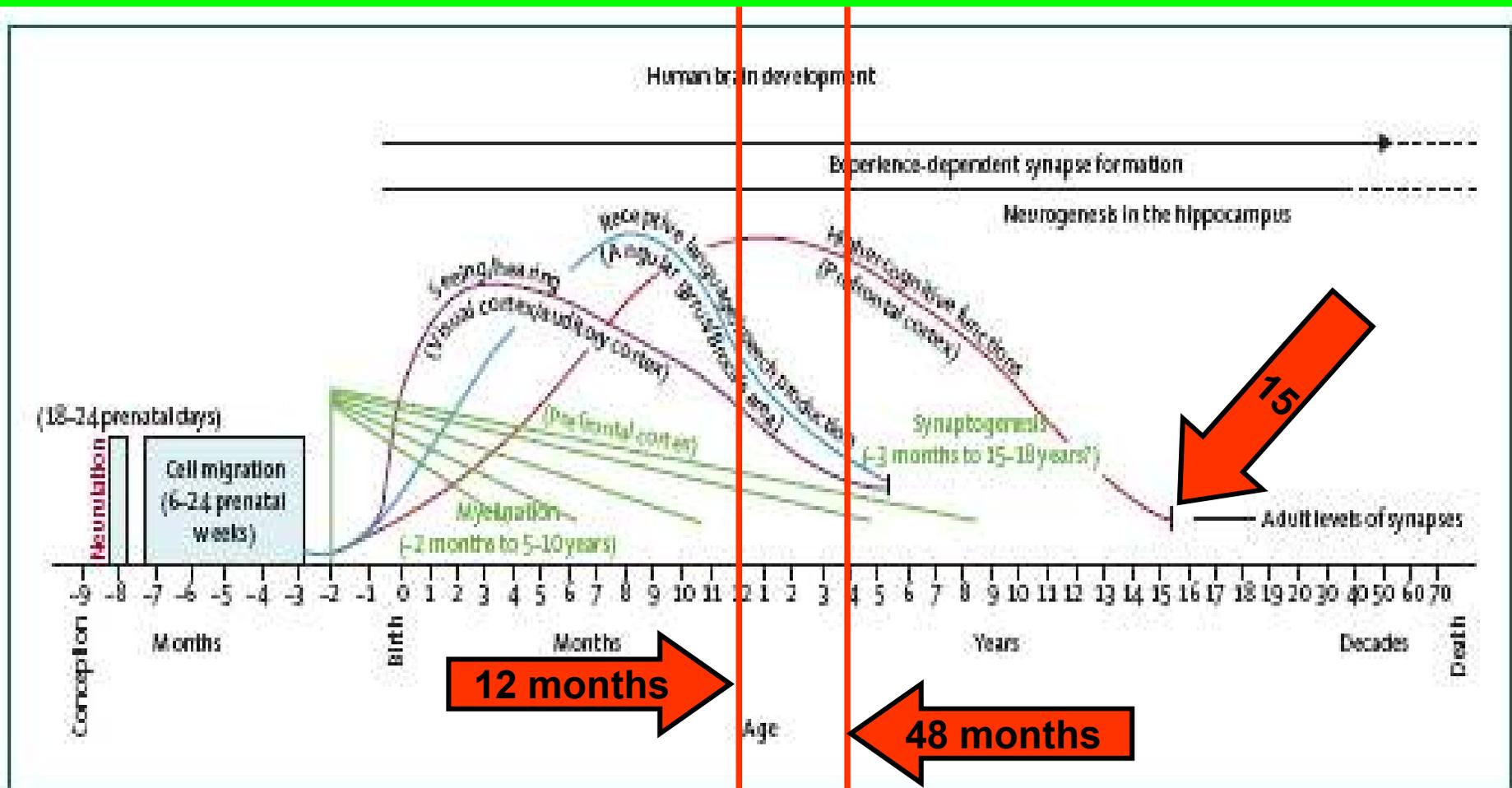


Figure 1: Human brain development

Reproduced with permission of authors and American Psychological Association* (Thompson RA, Nelson CA. Developmental science and the media: early brain development. *Am Psychol* 2001; 56: 5-15).

So, what can we do where we are in Africa?

- **Ensure nourishment**
 - Stable households
 - Good food for growing synapses
 - Good stimulation for growing synapses
 - Good psycho-social care
 - Lots of positive physical contact with the family
- **For each and every child and her family in Africa**

Effects of HIV/AIDS on the family



Poverty of
money, food,
well-being,

Dis-energy,
dis-energy,
dis-energy

Misery,
misery,
misery!

Dis-ease,
dis-ease,
dis-ease!

Effects of HIV on the child



**My family is
unwell and
unenergetic too**

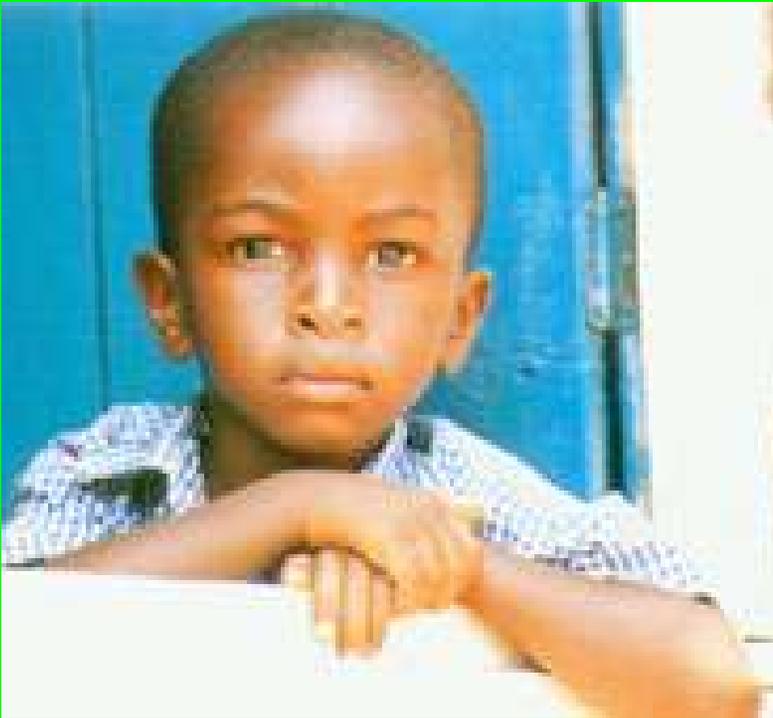
**...may be later in learning
to talk,
to learn,
to make ideas.**

**...may find it difficult
to listen to what others say,
and**

to carry out instructions.

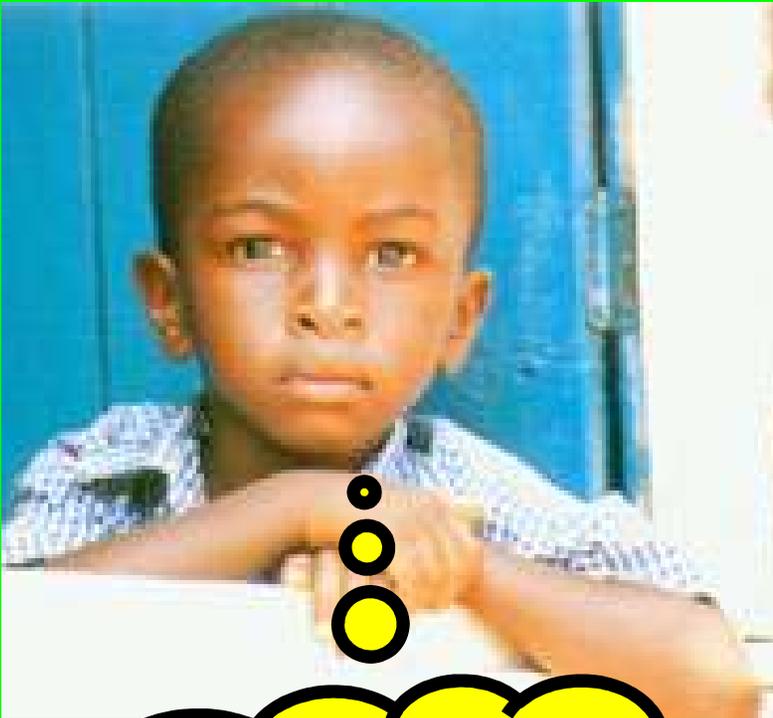
**...will feel unwell and
therefore NOT energetic.**

PoA



- **Who?**
- **Where?**
- **When?**
- **By whom?**
- **How?**
- **And Why?**

How?



He who does not
know one thing
knows another -
African proverb

One way ...

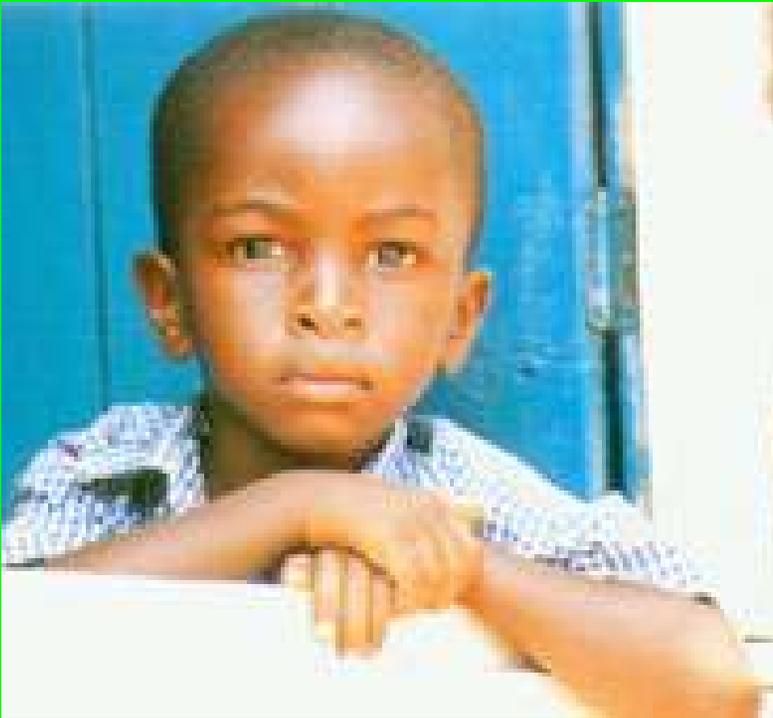
**Picture Books (with
some words) for**

babies and children

For reading on the

laps of family

GOOD, Positive Stimulation



- **The more I am stimulated from birth**
- **The more pathways grow between my brain cells**
- **The more I can grab opportunities for learning**
- **The more I learn**
- **The more I think**
- **The more I have ideas**

The Baby's Brain

All babies' brains from birth are for exploring, investigating, finding out, asking questions, thinking of ideas, creating solutions to problems through sensory, cognitive and language development.



If I don't get the chance to do these things, will I have barriers to learning later on?

My Ideas



**AND my brain
grows only when
I receive love and
care**

**I get my ideas when I am
thinking.**

I think all the time.

From my birth!

I see problems.

I see patterns.

I try out solutions.

I have ideas all the time.

My Ideas



I LOVE to think of ideas.

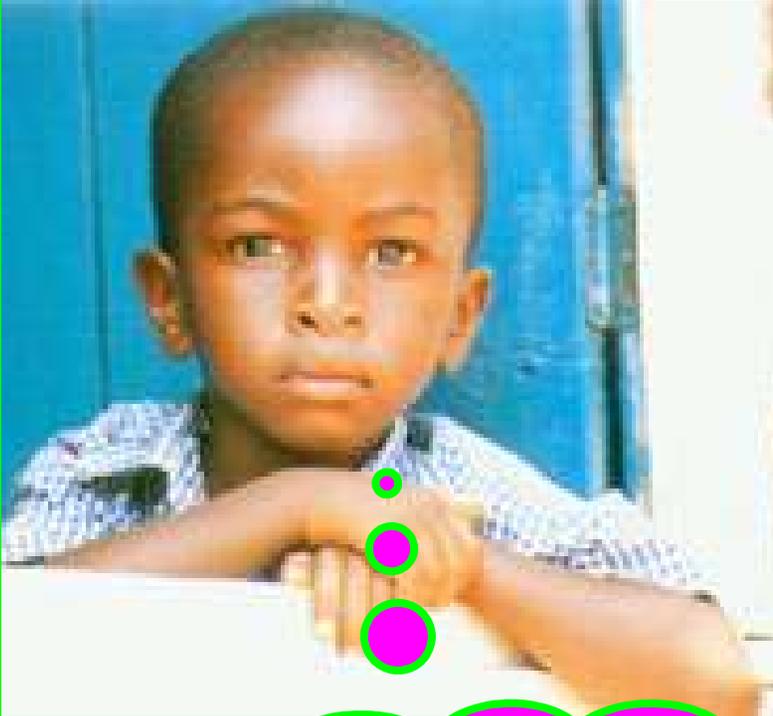
I HAVE to think of ideas.

I HAVE to ask questions.

I HAVE to know answers.

**I HAVE to have
positive physical and
emotional contact to
be able to do this**

Key Messages



How can we
organise this
for each day?

Let's find something new to learn about every day.

Let's take time to play together every day.

Let's find an opportunity to make a choice every day.

Let's try to find a different taste or scent every day.

Let's look for different textures every day.

Let's tell stories and ask questions and talk every day.

Let's find something new to look at every day.

Let's look at these books every day.

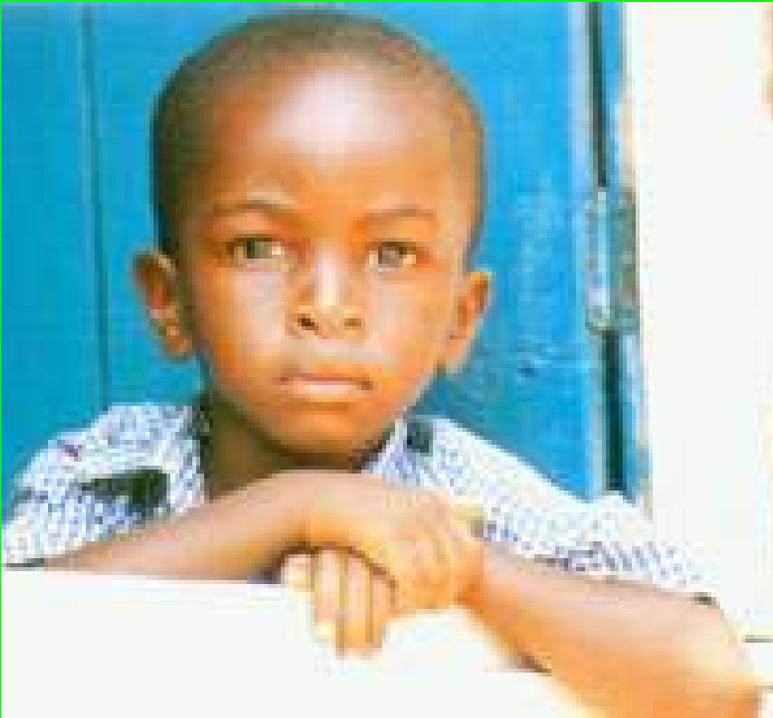
Let's practice problem solving every day.

Let's share ideas every day.

Thinking about policies in the meantime as well of course...

- **Commodification of children** (“ECD”; “OVC”; “HIV/AIDS”)
- **Separation** (children, biological parents, nutrition programmes, services)
- **Obfuscation** (housing, grant application, services)
- **Indignification** (Who? The poor? Why?)

African Proverbs



You can tell the strength of a nation by the strength of its FAMILIES.

It takes a village (Local Government +) to raise a child