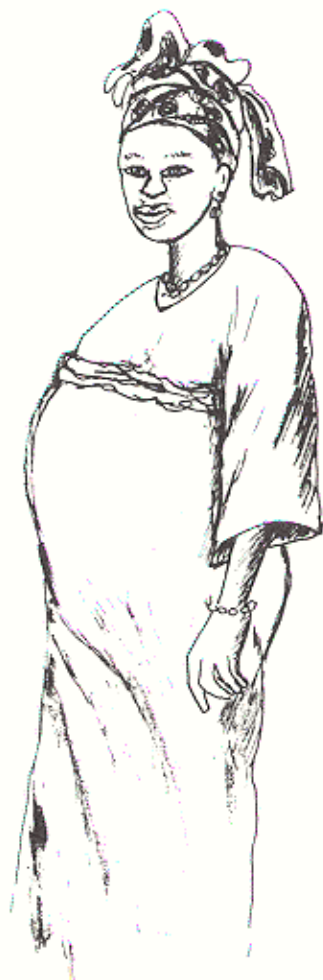
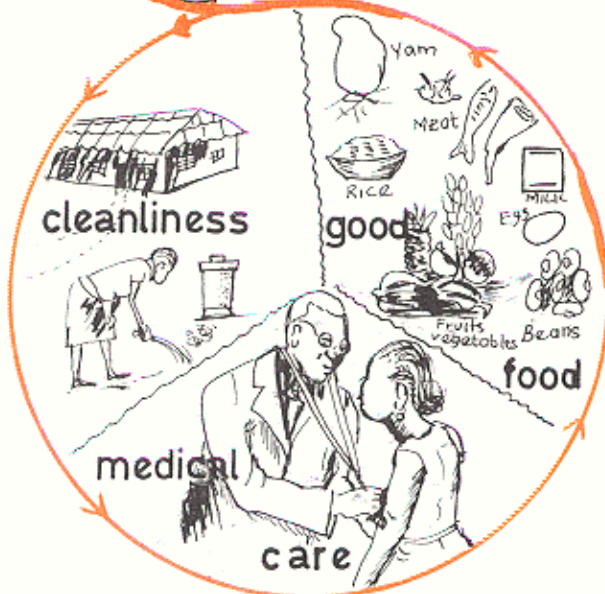


CHILD CARE



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INTRODUCTION:

* The year 1979 has been rightly marked as the International Year of the Child (IYC) by the United Nations Organisation. Likewise the World Health Organisation (WHO) has stimulated both the community and government actions in improving the health of the child particularly, and that of the entire population generally during the World Health Day Celebration in April, 1979.

Voluntary, religious and social organisations have embarked on various programmes to improve the lot of our beloved children.

A greater percentage of the population has undoubtedly realised the need for the "Care of the Child".

This pamphlet therefore highlights the essential ways by which the child could achieve optimum health.

ANTE-NATAL CARE:

The child is a welcomed and very important person in the family. The child forms the most precious source of happiness in the home, especially in the African context of marriage.

The care of the child starts in the womb from the time of conception. Ante-Natal Care is therefore essential. This includes the health care of the pregnant mother as well as that of the unborn child. The child's delivery should be under a special care for the safety of both the mother and the child.

NUTRITION:

A well balanced diet in pregnancy and during the time of lactation is essential for the mother. Breast milk is the best milk for the child. After about six months the child may also have massed food including fruits. The balanced diet is necessary for body building, growth and energy. The mother should have a good knowledge of the local diet after weaning. Attending a Well-Baby Clinic will surely help the proper growth and development of the child and prevent the child from communicable diseases.

IMMUNISATION:

During childhood, children stand the risk of contacting communicable diseases which could be easily prevented through immunisation. It is therefore the moral responsibility of the parents to see that their children are immunised against these infectious diseases. This is an important aspect of Maternal Child Health Programme.

CARE OF THE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD:



Physical activities are essential part of growth and development of the child.

Now that the child has attained the school age and has started his formal education, it is the responsibility of the parents, the teachers and the community to see to the healthful living of the child. In order to meet the educational and health needs of the child, every local health authority has a duty towards every child attending school in the area.

Ideally, every child should be medically examined at least once in the primary school, and again at the age of eleven before starting the secondary school.

Physical activities are also very important in the life of the growing child and they should not be neglected.

Daily observation by both the parents and the teachers will help in eliminating future abnormalities in the children.

SCHOOL MEAL:

The importance of school meal to the school child cannot be over emphasised. To promote the school child's health, his daily balanced diet is required. Buying of food from hawkers during regular lunch break should be discouraged. Schools are advised to employ food vendors so as to make sure that the food is prepared under hygienic conditions; and if possible in the school premises.

The authorities would be able to see that the food handlers undergo routine medical examination to prevent contamination of foods.



Mid-day meal helps the child to grow healthy.

PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN:

A physically handicapped child should not be neglected, he deserves special care, and attention and needs full opportunity for education, welfare, play and recreation. This category of children may need to be sent to special schools to get the full benefit. Parents of physically handicapped children need some training to help them cope with such children at home. A handicapped child, if properly catered for is his parents joy. Parents of such children must remember that everyone has his/her own cross to bear. The cross we bear differs from one to the other.

HEALTH EDUCATION:

Health Education starts at home and not at school as most parents think. A child observes his parents, looks at himself and uses the parents and his environment as a mirror. The parents are the very first health educators the child comes in contact with and therefore it goes without saying that the necessary foundation to most things including Health Education are laid by the parents.

The health knowledge, attitude, practices and behaviour they acquire either at home or in the school will remain with them in adult life.

Remember, the children of to-day are the adult citizens, tax payers and parents of tomorrow, take good care of your children, they are your joy and source of happiness.

Children are the joy of the world. Keep them healthy.

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