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# Building Brains: Building Futures

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# What is ECD ?

**a)WHEN:** The '*early childhood*' period of life encompasses distinct phases:

- from 'conception to birth'
- from 'birth to 3 years', with emphasis on the first 1,000 days
- the 'preschool and pre-primary years (or the age of school entry)

**b)WHAT:** constitute '*Development*'

It is an outcome, the continuous process of acquiring skills and abilities during this age period – across the domains of cognition, language, motor, social and emotional development.

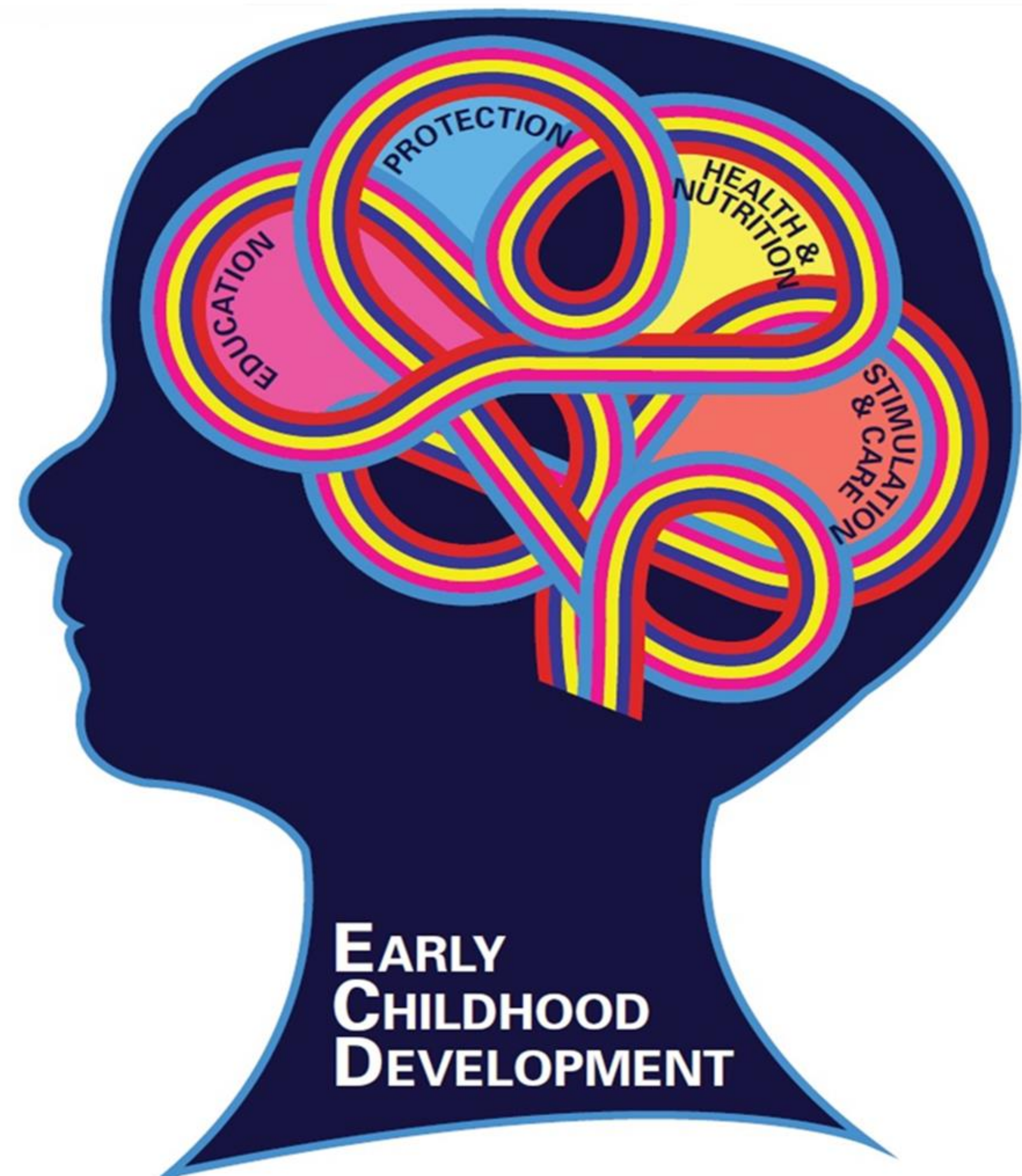
**c)HOW:** development occurs

Development is the result of the interaction between the environment and the child – the key aspect of the environment is 'nurturing care'.



# Building Brains – Building Futures

**Early childhood development is the foundation of sustainable development**



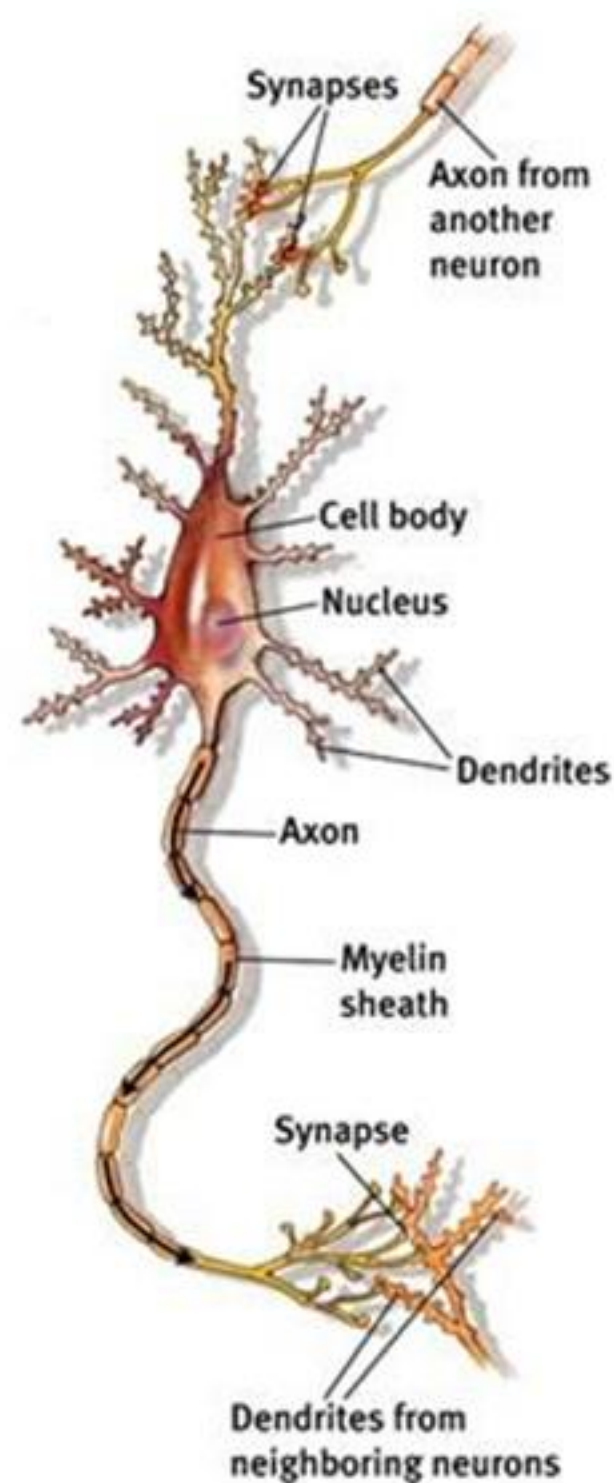


# The Early Years are Recognized as Foundational for the Transformation We Hope to Achieve with the SDGs



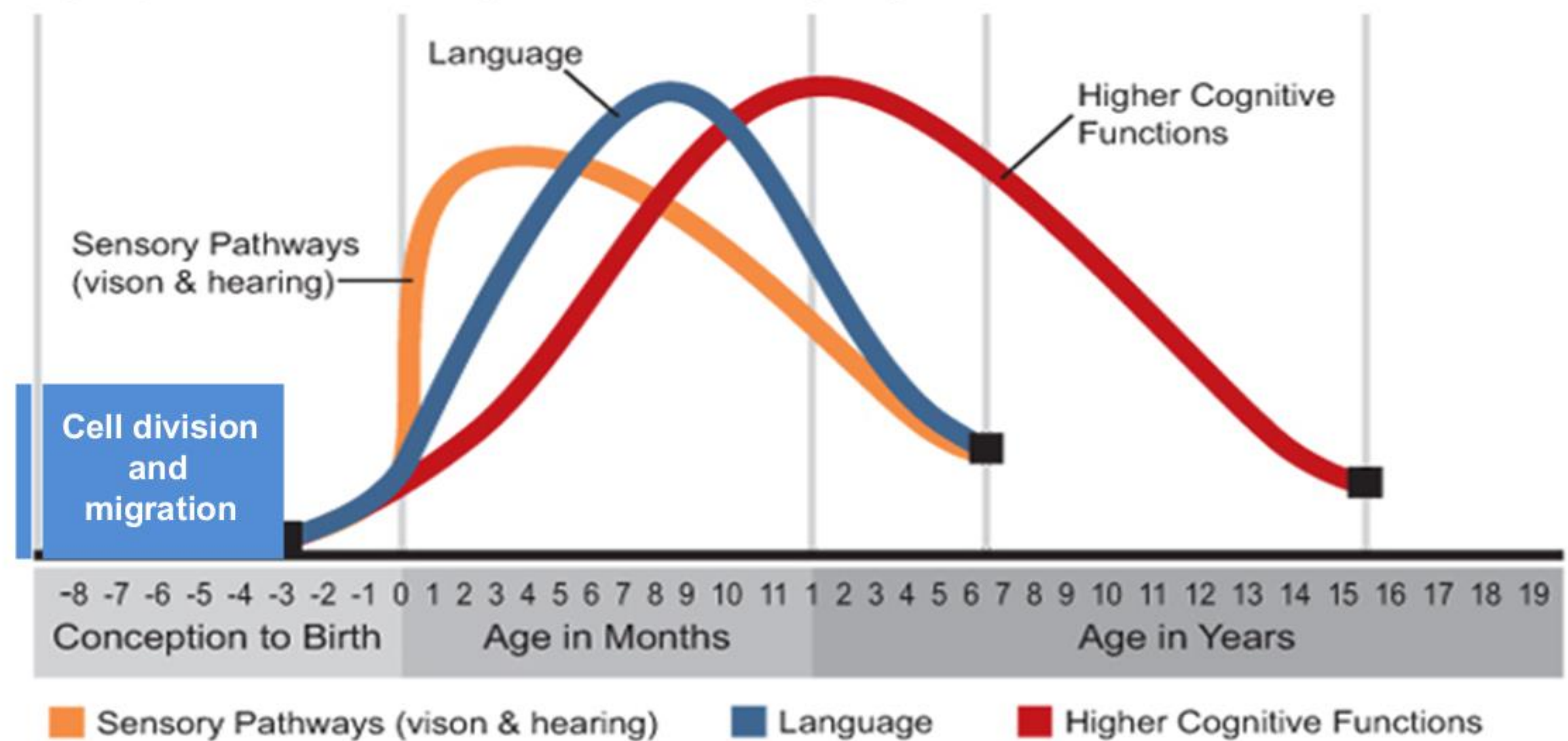


# Sensitive periods and the developing brain



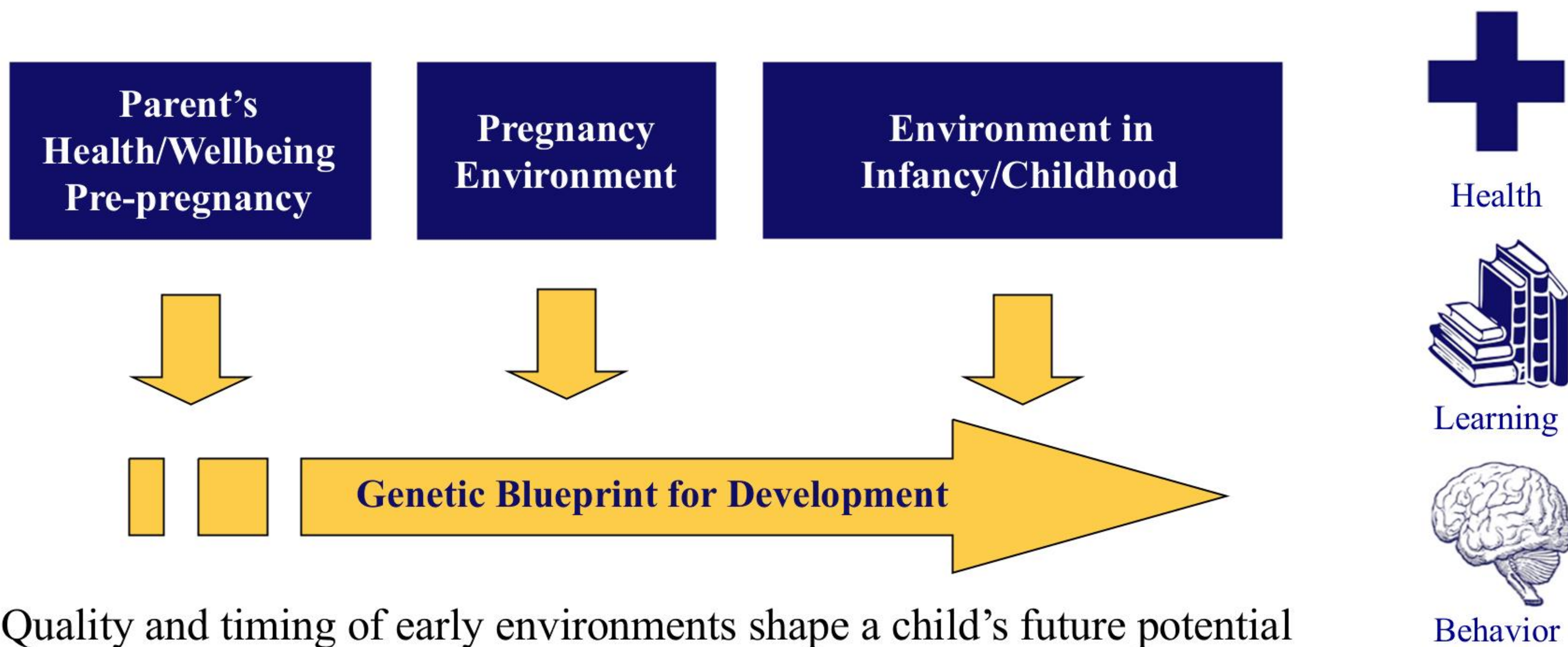
## Human Brain Development

Synapse formation dependent on early experiences





# Environments across the life-course



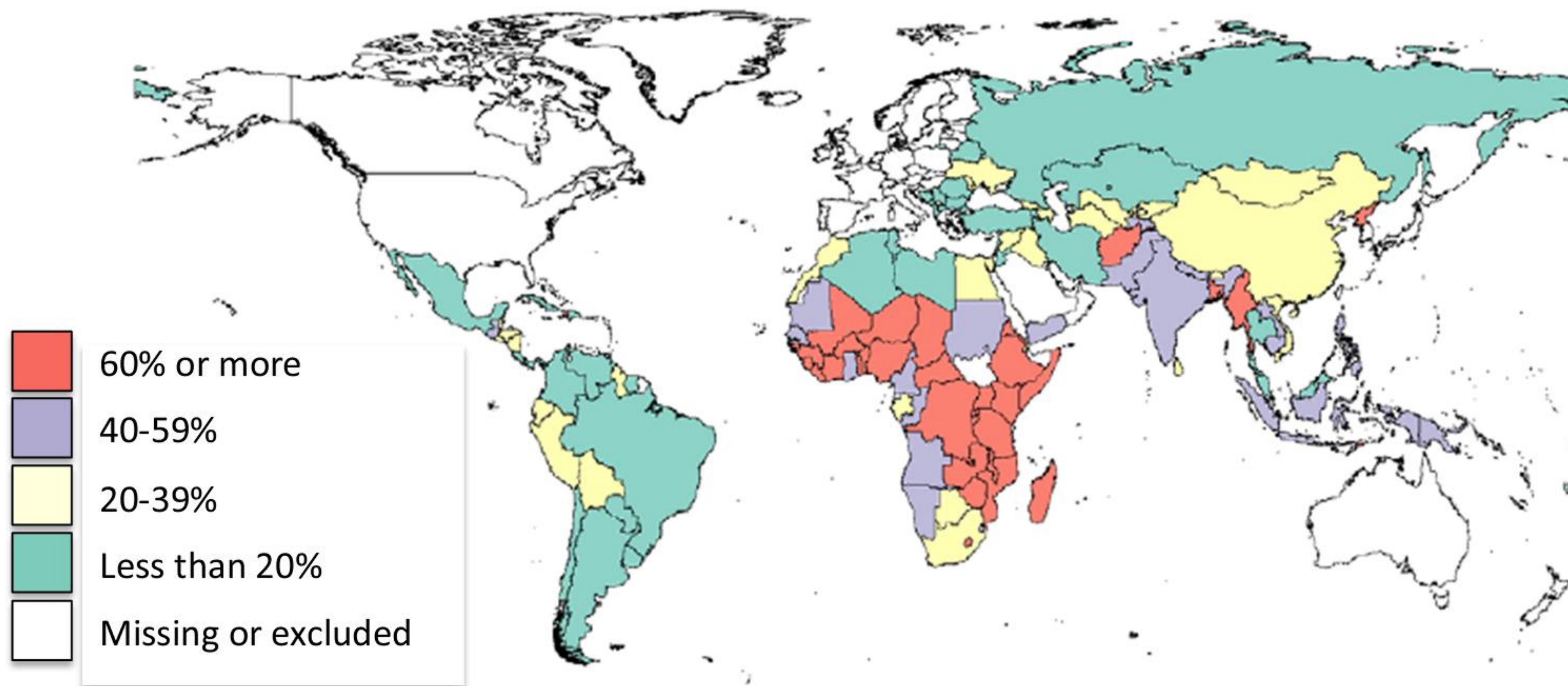


# Situation of Children Under-Five

**43% - 250 million** children at  
risk of not achieving  
development potential in LMIC



# Risk varies significantly by low, middle and upper-middle income countries





# Looking beyond risks of poverty & stunting

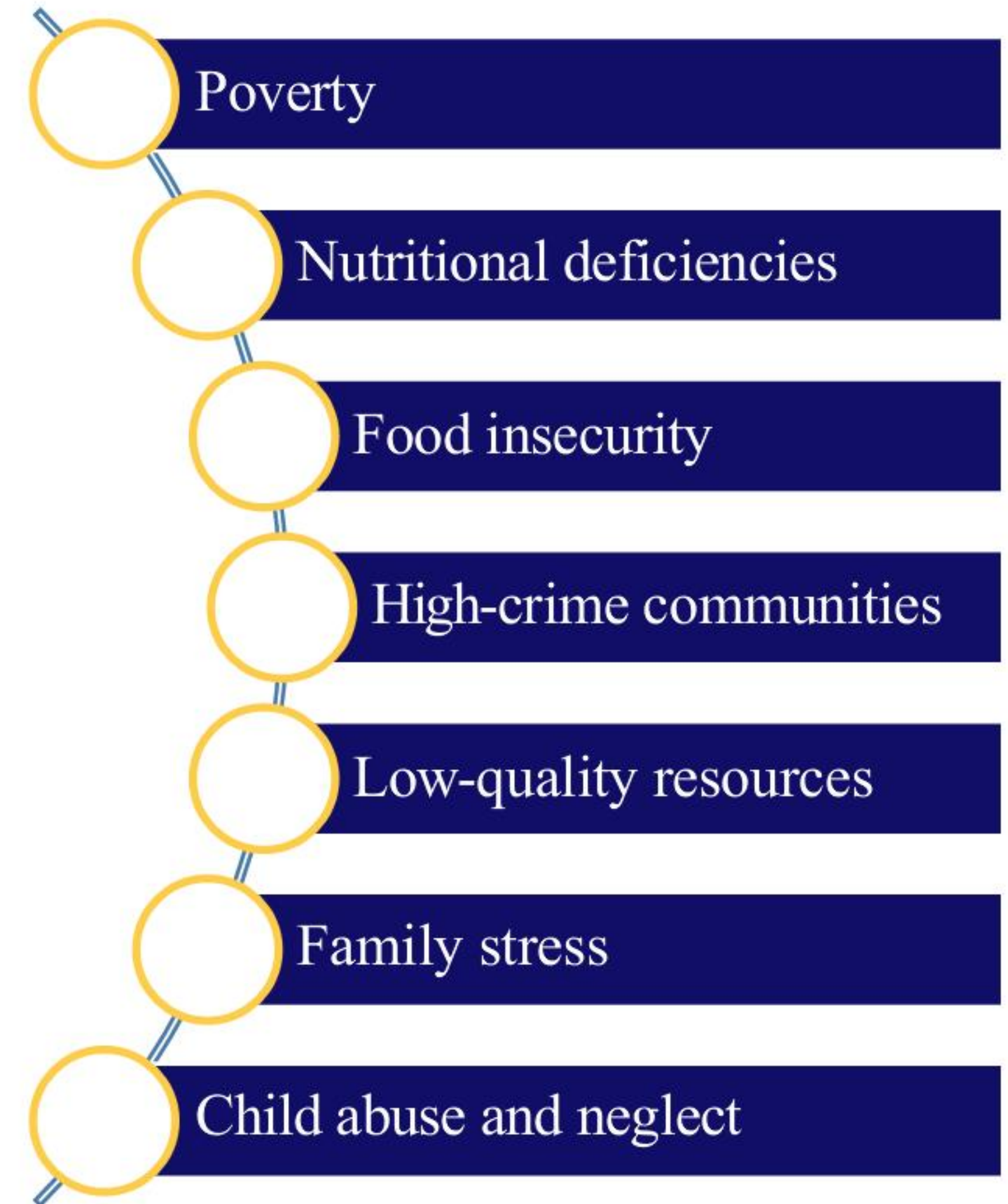
- Both low maternal schooling and child maltreatment are related to poor child outcomes
- When you add these factors, risk for poor outcomes increases dramatically





# Accumulation of adversity

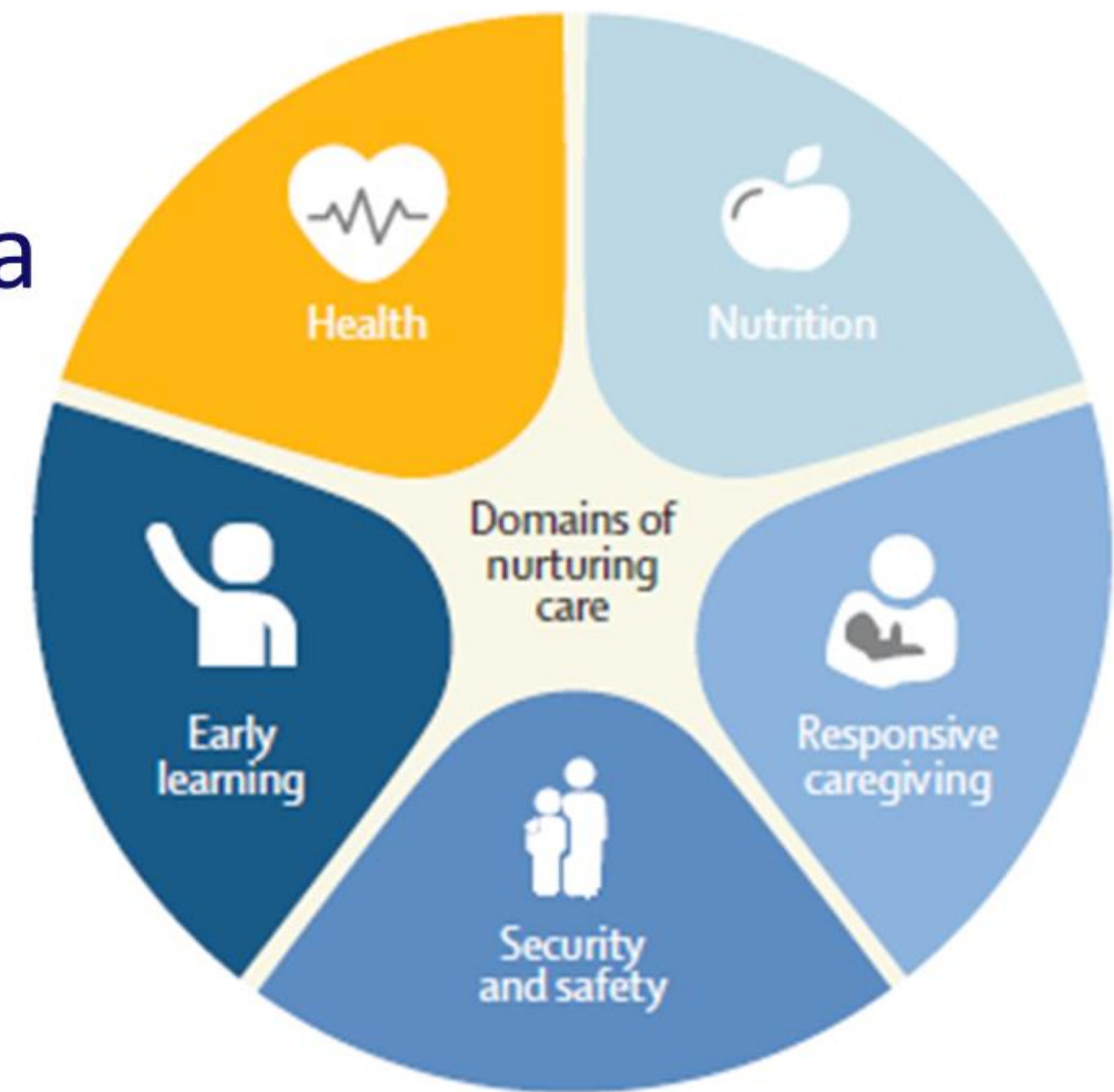
- As the number of risk factors increases, the severity of impact rises
- Children in LMICs are exposed to a greater number of risks





# Nurturing care

- Nurturing care envelops early child development
- Comprises all essential elements for a child to grow physically, mentally and socially:
  - Nutrition
  - Health care
  - Love and security
  - Protection from danger
  - Opportunities to learn and discover the world





# Multi-sectoral Programmes: Review of interventions across multiple sectors

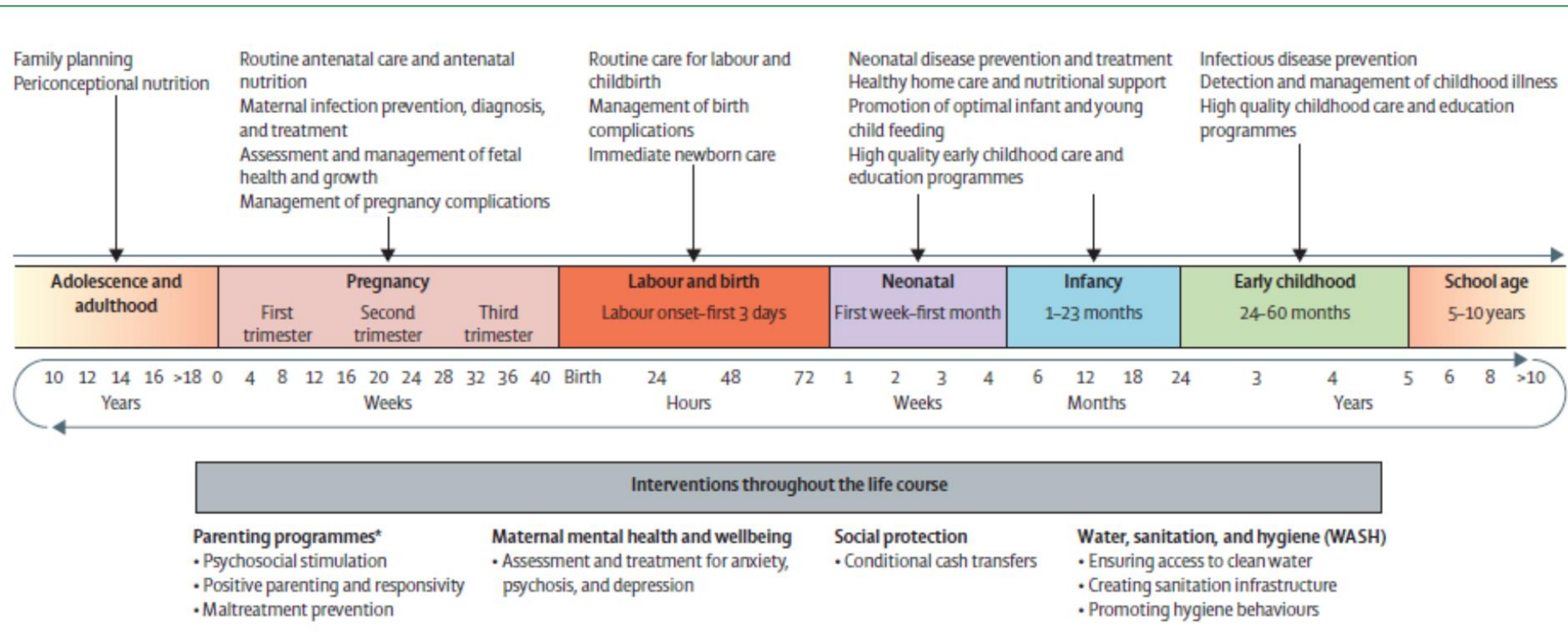
Comprehensive review of intervention studies published since 2010:  
RMNCH • nutrition • parenting • early childhood education • maltreatment prevention

Evidence in each sector

Interventions that benefit  
child development



# Multi-sectoral Programme: evidence-based interventions





# Country case studies of scale

## Chile Crece Contigo (ChCC)



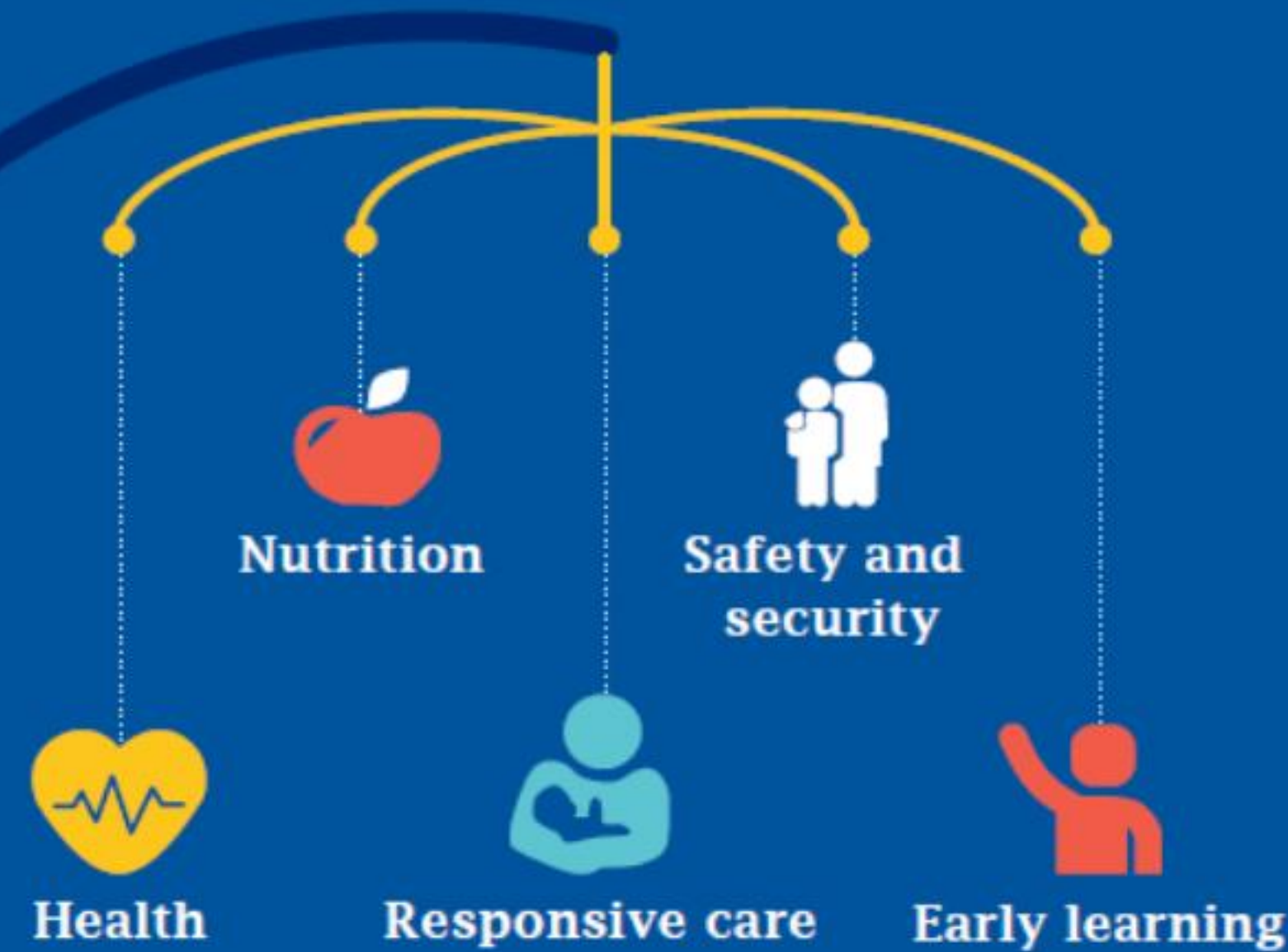
- Goal: enable children to reach their potential
- Implemented in 2007, came into law in 2009
- Funded by federal government
- Combines health services, parenting support and preschool
- Universal and targeted services
- From pregnancy to age 4
- Scale – reaches 80% of target population



Every Young Child Has the Right 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

The Lancet Early Childhood Development Series 2016



# GLOBAL REPORT ON ECD

Invest urgently in services that give young children, especially the most deprived, the best start in life.

Expand access to effective and essential early childhood development services in homes, schools, communities and health clinics.

Make family-friendly early childhood development policies a national priority – and a private sector imperative.

Collect data on essential indicators of early childhood development and track progress in reaching the most deprived.

Provide dedicated leadership for early childhood development programmes and coordinate efforts more effectively across sectors.

Drive demand for high-quality early childhood development services.





# Around 75 million children under-5 live in areas affected by conflict

- Spending their formative years in unsafe, unstimulating environments
- Increasing their risk of toxic stress, which can inhibit brain cell connections in early childhood



# Conceptualizing ECD for Peacebuilding





# WHY: ECD and PEACE

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1. **Neurobiology of peace:** nurturance in the first years of life builds child's ability to trust and form relationships with others.
2. **Impact on child-society:** Early learning programmes promote prosocial behaviours, emotional regulation, executive function skills.
3. **Household impact:** ECD reduces violence in the home, reduction of harsh discipline, more positive spousal relationships.
4. **Community cohesion:** multi-ethnic communities build harmonious relationships due to provision of ECD services.
5. **Social Justice and inequality:** ECD interventions equalize society.



# Building Capacity to Adult Play

## The Early Childhood Development Kit

- A box containing early-learning, play and psycho-social materials that address the developmental needs of children from birth to age six in emergency settings
- The ECD Kits are accompanied by the relevant guidelines and training materials to support project implementers/ service providers (EN, FR, SP, RUS, POR)
- Since 2009, across 86 countries reaching around 4 million children
- Changes in learning and psychosocial well-being, parental and caregiver/teacher interactions





# Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC)


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