



## ROLE OF PANCHAYATIRAJ INSTITUTIONS IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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### **Abstract**

*Children are the most valuable members of the family. As we nurture them today, so will be the future of our nation tomorrow. All the government institutions need to take up activities to support and protect children. Children are the pillars of the community and the nation. We need to provide them with adequate care and protection, to ensure their healthy growth and .To guide and support the families for the due care of children ,to make the government programmes for children effective and to solve local problems, the Grama Panchayat need to play a crucial role.'Child-friendly' Grama Panchayats can help children realize their potential. The role of Grama Panchayats, as local governments closest to the people, is critical, as they can have first knowledge of issues. To guide the elected representatives and functionaries of Grama panchayats to ensure healthy growth protection of children in the Grama panchayat area, the book-Child Development in Gram Panchayats has been prepared. The book contains basic information about the various issues regarding children that need to be addressed and the role of Grama Panchayat in identifying as well as addressing the issues.*

**Keywords:** *Child development, Gramapanchayat, Child Protection.*

### **Introduction**

Children grow, develop & learn throughout their lives from birth & infancy to adulthood. The child's development can be measured through social, physical & cognitive developmental milestones. If children fail to develop properly, they may be unable to reach their full potential. However, health care professionals & parents can work together as partners to help children grow healthy & strong. The intent of early child interventions is to lay a foundation in conjunction with the family to support infants as they grow & mature into healthy individuals. A healthy status means achieving the best possible outcome for a child in physical, mental & social functioning.

Though children grow, develop and learn throughout life the first five years of life are critical, and so an increasing number of early childhood interventions are being developed and implemented both by the government & the private sectors. Apart from these social, religious, economic and political institutions, media & cultural values can also influence how children live their lives. Study of child development is important because it provides practical guidance for all those who care for children. International agreement on standard child development indicators has been reached only for health and nutrition. The commonly used child development indicators can be broadly divided into health indicators, nutrition indicators and cognitive development indicators.

### **Areas Where Panchayts Play A Major Role In Child Development**

1. Health and nutrition.
2. Early Childhood Care and Education.
3. Education.
4. Children with special needs.
5. Adolescence.
6. Child protection.
7. Child participation.

### **Role of Panchayat In Health And Nutrition**

Most public health services are delivered by the Health Department of the State Government that is not directly accountable to the Gram Panchayats. Nevertheless, Gram Panchayats are expected to monitor the access and quality of delivery of those services. Elected Representatives must have the knowledge and skills to monitor the quality of services being delivered so as to ensure that no one is left unreached, and must have the competence and confidence to hold officials, service providers and frontline functionaries of the Department accountable. .Every State provides for capacity building of Gram Panchayats to enhance their knowledge and skills about the various services being delivered so that they can mobilize the people to access the services, take part in awareness generation drives, effectively supervise the existing health initiatives and ensure that the ongoing activities are properly implemented.

### **Panchayatiraj and Primary Education**

Role of Education in Rural Development: Education is an important process of harmonious development of the nation-social, economic, industrial and agricultural. Education trains the people to face the challenges and make their lives better and luxurious etc. It develops the sense of responsibility of citizenship among students and people to understand the importance of education in life. Education is an important weapon which develops the sense of responsibility as citizens towards rural development and management through Panchayatiraj system for maintaining the sustainable development. As far as role of education is concerned, education is a process of all round development of individuals' personality. It is an important instrument of mental, social, and economic development of the individuals. True education must make the individual free and easy instead of making sophisticated and complex. Education is the light of life which can bring about the concept of selfrule and sovereign democracy in the lives of people. It conveys different meaning for different regions under different spheres.

Panchayati Raj institutions are main body of village local government that play very a significant role in development of village especially primary education, health, agricultural developments, women and child development and women participation in local government etc. The Panchayatiraj institutions are important system which play a vital role in rural development and management of all spheres etc. Panchayatiraj institutions are the backbone of village/rural development which inculcate the sense of care of rural development and rural management for sustainable development. The various types of programmes for rural developments such basic primary education, health centres, cottage industries, agriculture development, and agriculture marketing, transportations and others village developments run under panchayatiraj system/village developments authority.

### **Children With Special Needs**

Children with special needs may have mild learning disabilities or profound cognitive impairment; they may have food allergies or a terminal illness. A child's special needs may include developmental delays that catch up quickly or remain entrenched. They're children who have a disability or a combination of disabilities that makes learning or other activities difficult. Special-needs children include those who have: Mental Retardation, which causes them to develop more slowly than other children. Speech and Language Impairment, such as a problem expressing themselves or understanding others. Physical Disability, such as vision problem, cerebral palsy, or other conditions. Learning Disabilities, which distort messages from their senses. Emotional Disabilities, such as antisocial or other behavioral problems.

Many government programs exist to help children of all ages further their development. Children with special needs will not be able to take advantage of all of the programs that schools and the government have to offer. However, there are many programs that were created specifically for special needs children.

### **Adolescence**

Adolescence is a period of life with specific health and developmental needs and rights. It is also a time to develop knowledge and skills, learn to manage emotions and relationships, and acquire attributes and abilities that will be important for enjoying the adolescent years and assuming adult roles.

Adolescence is one of the most rapid phases of human development.

1. Biological maturity precedes psychosocial maturity. This has implications for policy and programme responses to the exploration and experimentation that takes place during adolescence.
2. The characteristics of both the individual and the environment influence the changes taking place during adolescence.
3. Younger adolescents may be particularly vulnerable when their capacities are still developing and they are beginning to move outside the confines of their families.
4. The changes in adolescence have health consequence not only in adolescence but also over the life-course.
5. The unique nature and importance of adolescence mandates explicit and specific attention in health policy and programmes.

### **Child Protection**

The right to protection covers all forms of child exploitation and cruelty, arbitrary separation of children from their families and abuses in the criminal justice system. For MSS, child protection is about safeguarding children from any perceived or real danger or risk to their life, their personhood and their childhood. It is about reducing their vulnerabilities to any kind of harm, and protecting them from harmful situation. It is also about ensuring that no child falls out of the social security and safety net. For those who do, it is about providing the necessary care, protection and support required to bring them back inside the safety net. Child protection includes



1. Child labour.
2. Child marriage.
3. Child sexual abuse.
4. Corporal punishment.
5. Child victims of trafficking and missing children.
6. Destitute, abandoned and orphaned children without parental care.

### **Child Participation**

Child participation is one of the core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which asserts that children and young people have the right to freely express their views and that there is an obligation to listen to children's views and to facilitate their participation in all matters affecting them within the family, schools, local communities, public services, institutions, government policy, and judicial procedures.

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises that children have a right to be heard. The application of this right has been broadly conceptualised as 'participation', although the term itself does not appear in the Convention. Of course, children have always participated in many ways within societies – for example, at the community level, through play and the arts, and in their economic contribution to their families. In the context of Article 12, however, the term 'participation' has evolved, and is now very widely used, as a shorthand to describe children's right to involvement in decisions and actions that affect them and to have those views taken into account. Children's right to be heard and to be taken seriously is a crucial and also visionary provision of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children can no longer be perceived as passive recipients of care and protection, or accidental beneficiaries of policy decisions; they cannot be envisaged as not yet persons or adults in the making. Attention must be paid to their inner feelings, thoughts and views.

### **Conclusion**

Government policy on Health for All emphasizes the importance of immunization and maternal and childcare. Child development has to take into account social, physical and cognitive development of the children. There are many factors that influence child development. An understanding of child development is not only important for the parents but also for the teachers and health care providers. To measure child development, an attempt has been made to develop relevant indicators of child development. Panchayat as local governance has a vital role in providing the needed infra-structure for promoting education, health and environment for child development. It is also necessary for the local governance to monitor their activities to achieve the holistic development of children and to make the Panchayat as Child Friendly.

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