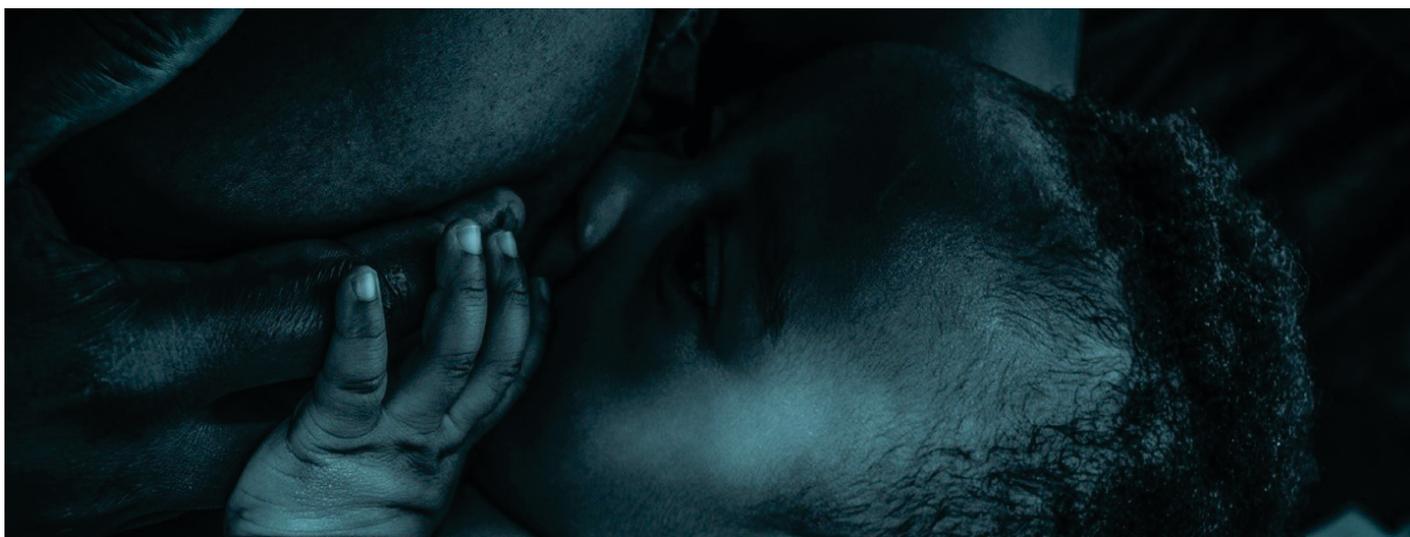


Summarized by: **Swati Sudarsan and Jessica DeRuiter**



Children born and raised in poverty have an increased risk of not reaching their full potential due to lack of care and or resources. Early childhood development and intervention can help these children reach their full potential on multiple levels. Children who are not well supported during their early development are less likely to be successful as adults.

This article summarized the key points from a Lancet series on advancing early childhood development. One main point is that nurturing care should be the basic right of every child because it is fundamental to a child's development. Nurturing care is a concept that includes a set of activities and protections that promote healthy child development from conception through the first 1000 days. It consists of good nutrition, adequate care, provision of learning opportunities from birth onwards, and protection from disease, violence and stress.

Another point was that resources to support children's development should focus on the most disadvantaged families that struggle to provide nurturing care for their children. Disadvantaged families included those who lived in extreme poverty and those who required humanitarian assistance.

Systems in these settings were to be made resilient against the disruptive influence of natural disasters and violence/conflict.

Moreover, the authors advocated investment in rigorous research on the delivery of interventions and their outcomes (both long and short term) as this is essential for improving early child programs. In addition, robust and valid indicators were recommended to be developed to assess the cognitive and socio emotional development of children.

The paper also recommended that resources should be allocated deliberately across countries and regions with strong partnerships across public and private sectors, academia, civil society, professional associations, foundations, donors, and local communities.

The authors of this report made a commitment to make early childhood investments, policies, and programs an important part of their support to the countries in which they operated.

Overall, this Lancet series was important because it ultimately established that reaching children is a necessity for sustainable development and that it is a collective goal and responsibility to provide this service to children around the world so that they can all reach their potential.

Chan, Margaret, Anthony Lake, and Keith Hansen. "The early years: silent emergency or unique opportunity?." *The Lancet* 389.10064 (2017): 11-13.