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## PUBLIC HEALTH, NUTRITION &amp; EPIDEMIOLOGY

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**The pancharatna model of child nutrition, growth and development****Mickey Mehta**

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A child is an opportunity, soft clay waiting for taking shape. The earlier days certainly require, caring palms, soothing balms, as every child grows and blossoms better with deep sense of security. Nurturing them with love is primary and a 24x7 connect becomes fundamental for it to bloom. Remember every child is born with a unique genetic signature and before it becomes a conscious human being it is a natural creature. Letting the child remain uninhibited in terms of rolling on the ground, crawling around and constantly chuckling around is paramount. Everything that they ingest is what they will be made up of and that is exactly what they grow to become. A child ought to be fed environmentally well; with loads of sunshine, spending time in open spaces, places to run and jump from trees, listening to chirping of birds and humming of bees. This is primary nourishment that every child needs. And mind you, humans cultivate taste unlike animals that eat instinctively; thus the child must only know the taste of nature that of natural wholesome food, fruits and vegetables to start with, dry fruits, nuts and whole grains to follow. Children need to be active and playful throughout, challenging the body and mind shapes them into the high achievers of tomorrow. The balance of mind and the heart, thinking and feeling should be well inculcated with lessons for reasoning and on sharing as well. The children have mirror neurons; their learning ability without reasoning and analysis till the age of 7 is phenomenally high. Moral science and community living through anecdotes and legendary stories should be a part of the personality development, seeding character forming inspiration thereby. Since each child is born with a distinct genetic signature, its unfolding also happens equally unique; but the science says though the predetermined disposition can be altered with intelligent and conscious intervention of lifestyle inputs and choices. A child's growth and development can far exceed the gene program it is born with, if and when it is nurtured and groomed with the pancharatna model of nutrition and development for children designed from the knowledge and wisdom of the ancient Indian Vedas.

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