

Early Childhood Intervention(ECI)

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Outline

- I. What is ECI?
- II. Brief history of ECI development
- III. Characteristics of ECI services
- IV. Early brain development
- V. Types of children included in ECI services
- VI. Role of Physiotherapist in ECI

I. What is ECI?

What is ECI?

- Early Childhood Intervention
- ECI services serve children principally from **birth to age three and up to five years of age.**
- ECI services are tailored to meet the needs of individual child.



Types of children

- Fragile birth status
- Developmental delays
- Disabilities
- Malnutrition
- Chronic health issues that affect their development
- Atypical behaviors (autism spectrum, attention deficit & hyperactivity disorders)

- ECI is an **interdisciplinary** and coordinated national system of individualised and intensive Government services including social welfare, **health**, nutrition and education.
- ECI services are comprehensive, coordinated, integrated, **transdisciplinary** and intersectoral, including the full participation of the stakeholders.

- ECI services are conducted in **townships and communities** through partnerships between the Government and Non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and other organizations.

- ECI service providers **identify, screen, assess and establish** the eligibility of children for ECI services.
- ECI service providers and parents prepare individual service plans.
- Using those service plans, services are provided in the natural environment of the child through **home visits** (about 80% of the time) or **visits to child care centres** (20%).

Main ECI service goals

- **Improve** the development of children with developmental delays or disabilities
- **Prevent** disabilities and delays due to biological or environmental risks
- **Ensure** the participation of all children and families who need ECI services through meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families of all cultures and language groups
- **Help** parents to learn effective ways to develop their children well during usual daily activities, such as dressing, feeding, bathing, playing, visiting the market, etc.

The Importance of Serving “High Risk” Children

- Without early intervention, these children are at a high risk of becoming more developmentally delayed over time.
- Later treatments (after 3 years of age), when brain growth slows, are **much more costly and far less effective.**

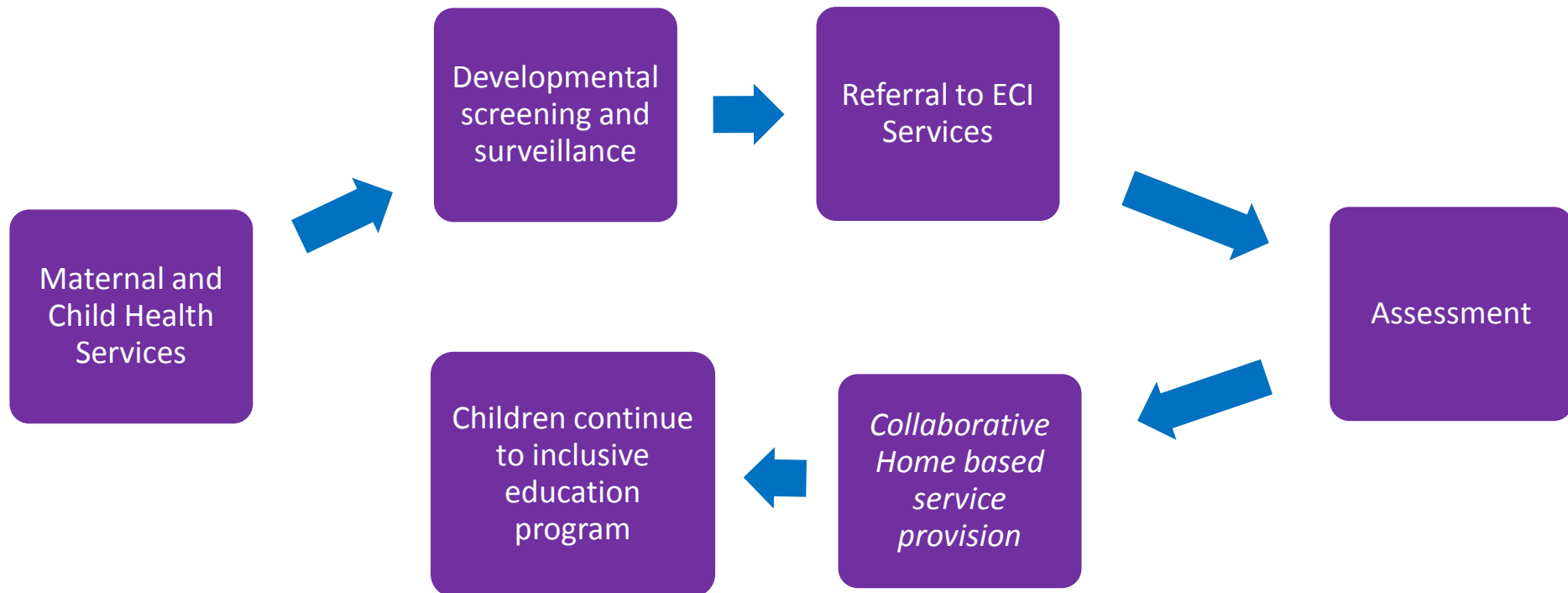
- By intervening early in their lives, ECI personnel help parents to learn developmentally appropriate parenting skills that prevent or reverse many (but not all) delays and disabilities in their children.
- ECI services prepare children to learn well in preschool and primary school and become productive citizens.
- **They lower the need for and costs of health care services, remedial education and rehabilitation treatments when they are older.**

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graph LR; A[Nation wide screening and surveillance to identify those that are developmentally delayed early; as early as possible] --> B[Provision of services to help develop identified children so that they can reach their developmental potential]
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Nation wide screening and surveillance to identify those that are developmentally delayed early; as early as possible

Provision of services to help develop identified children so that they can reach their developmental potential

Overview of ECI Services



II. Brief history of ECI development

Brief history of ECI development

- Early intervention research projects began in the US and Colombia, demonstrating that combined infant stimulation, health care and nutrition services greatly improve child development, especially of children with special needs.
- In the US, the first fully national ECI system with state and municipal-level programmes was established in 1986.

- National ECI systems now exist in:
 - Canada
 - all Western European nations
 - some Eastern European countries
 - Israel, India, Australia, New Zealand, **Singapore, Malaysia and partially in Thailand**
 - Turkey, provinces of China, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, South Africa and other countries



International legal basis for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989, ratified by Myanmar, 15 July 1991**
- **General Comment 7 to the CRC, *Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood*, focuses on national requirements to ensure young children receive their full rights (United Nations, 2006; Bernard van Leer, 2006)**

International legal basis for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)(Contd.)

- ***Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*** (CRPD), **ratified by Myanmar, 7 December 2011**
- **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by Myanmar, 22 July 1997**

National legal basis of ECI in Early Childhood Care & Development(ECCD) Policy of Myanmar, 2014

- ECCD Policy approved by the Cabinet in January 2014 and launched in July 2014 with strong Government participation



National legal basis of ECI in ECCD Policy of Myanmar, 2014(Contd.)

- **ECCD Strategy 3** is for ECI services, 3 to 5 years

(Develop, improve and expand early childhood intervention and rehabilitation services to help each child achieve his or her full potential, and to prevent the discrimination and stigmatisation of children with special needs.)



In Myanmar

- 40% of children require ECI services
- 35.1 % are moderately to severely stunted and associated with developmental delay
- 5-12% have disabilities, chronic diseases or atypical behaviors
- 70% attain expected levels of development for their age
- 30% will have lifelong disabilities

III. Characteristics of ECI services

Characteristics of ECI services

- They are **continuous** and include all professional services each child may need.
- One **paraprofessional home visitor** visits the home, and this visitor is supported by a team of professionals representing various disciplines.
- ECI services centre on the child, are **family-focused** and respectful of family values and child and parental rights to privacy and services.

Characteristics of ECI services(Contd.)

- They are **high-quality**, and provided in the culture and language of the home.
- They are based on the child's strengths, focus on the child's and family's needs, and last as long as the child needs them **up to 5 years of age**.
- They include all areas of child development and are based on the **latest research findings**.
- They are well coordinated, monitored and evaluated.

ECI services include

- Community outreach to identify children with special needs
- Universal screening of child development
- Referral to ECI services
- Initial ECI intake
- Comprehensive child & family assessments
- Establishment of eligibility for ECI services
- Preparation for an individualized service plan

ECI services include(Contd.)

- Regular home visits or visits to a daily childcare centre (usually once or twice a week) (including the parents & caregiver)
- Regular re-assessment and plan revision
- Transition services to inclusive preschools or primary schools or if needed, special services for children with complex disabilities
- Follow-up services as needed

Key specialists in ECI service

Trans-disciplinary team approach

- Early intervention specialists
- Home visitors who will be trained paraprofessionals
- **Physiotherapists**
- Speech therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Social workers
- Physicians(as needed)

Key specialists in ECI service(Contd.)

- Rehabilitation specialists
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Psychologists
- Others as per needed

ECI vision

- All of Myanmar's vulnerable children from birth to five years of age with developmental delays, malnutrition, disabilities and other special needs are able to access high quality ECI services in order to enjoy their rights and achieve their full developmental potential.

ECI Mission

- Conduct advocacy, communications for development and awareness activities for all families, stakeholders & decision markers
- Ensure strong co-ordination among all relevant ministries, state & regional governments, townships & their partner agencies for implementing ECI services
- Develop strong linkages & inter-agency agreements with services in the ECCD policy and other policies & plans related to child health, mental health, nutrition, sanitation, education & protection

ECI Mission(Contd.)

- Screen all children from birth to 5 years of age & identify all high risk children who may be eligible for ECI services.
- With their parents' full agreement & participation, refer them to ECI services where trans-disciplinary teams (including the parents) will conduct standardized assessments, establish program eligibility & develop individualized service plans.
- Provide ECI services in the natural environment of the child that build on the strengths & meet the needs of each child & family.

ECI Mission(Contd.)

- Plan & progressively provide high quality & individualized ECI services for eligible children in all regions of Myanmar
- Facilitate children's learning & development within their families & communities
- Build on the strengths of families of children with special needs and assist them to provide enabling, stimulating & safe environments that meet their needs and those of their children
- Ensure that children enrolled in ECI services will transition from those services to inclusive preschools, kindergartens, primary school, & will be fully included within society

ECI core concepts

- Equity and parental & child rights
- Child-centered, family focused & community based
- Intersectoral & interdisciplinary pre- and in-service training
- Comprehensive, balanced & transdisciplinary services
- Focus on the natural environments of child & full parental participation
- Support for transition of child & family to future inclusive services
- Intersectoral co-ordination & collaboration

Primary Goals of the National ECI system

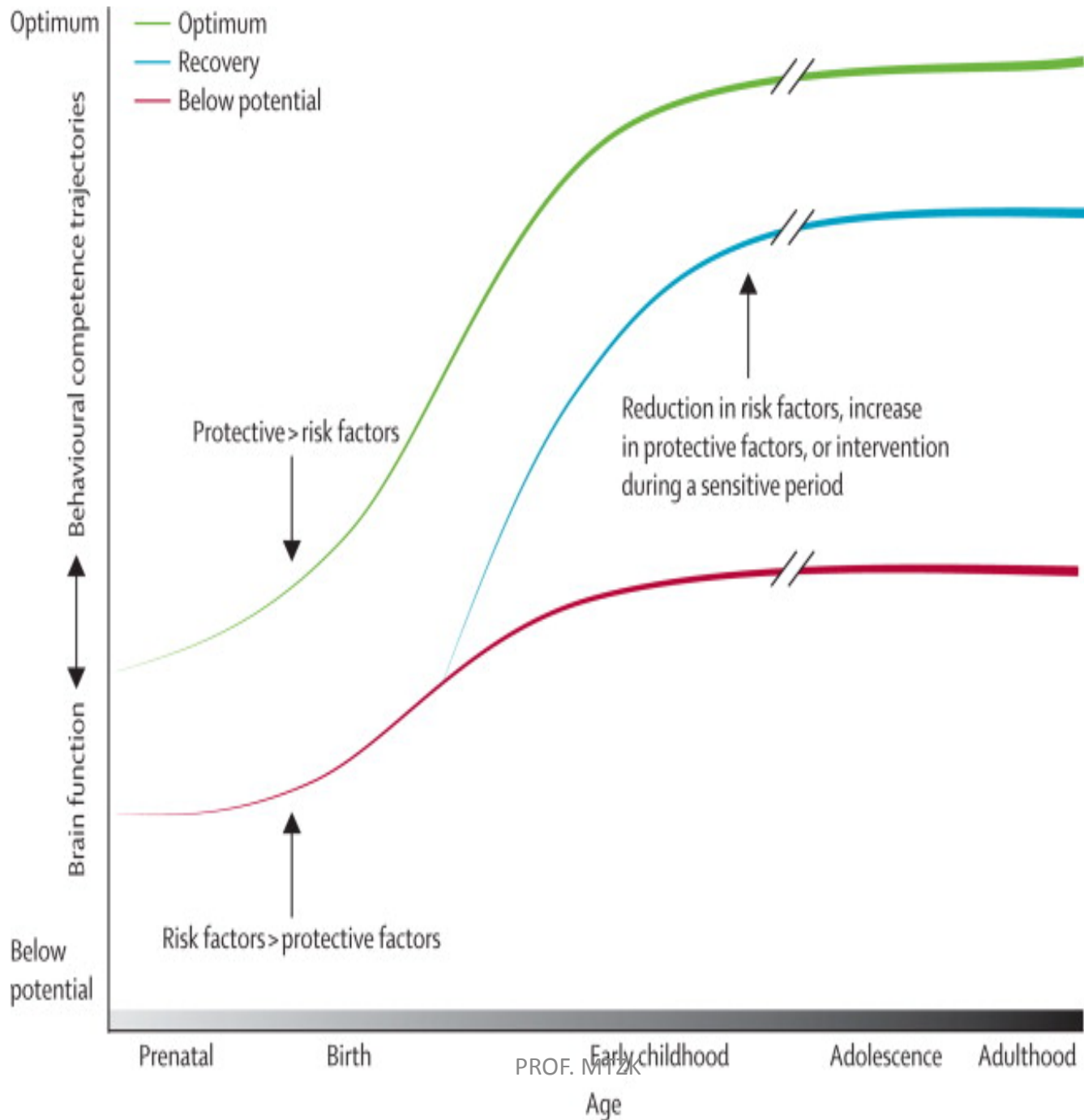
- ECI services were designed & prepared from 2015 to 2017.
- Pilot projects will be implemented in 4 regions or states during 2017-2018(Mon, Ayarwaddy, Sagaing, Yangon).
- November, 2018- Patheingyi, Yangon(East Dagon Township)
- Through continuously expanding ECI services, **by 2021** all 21 states, regions & self-administered areas will have begun some ECI services.
- **By 2025**, all vulnerable children in community of all townships will be served.

IV. Early brain development

The Science Behind ECI

- Learning starts from birth.
- Experiences and environments to which young people are exposed shape their **brain's structure and function**, and heavily influence their future development.
- Lost opportunities in the early years (from pregnancy through to eight years) can prove difficult to overcome **as learning is cumulative**.
- Skills developed in early years form the foundation of how children behave and learn into the future.

- Prolonged exposure to poor environments and behaviors can therefore have **significant detrimental impacts on children's development** and future opportunities.
- The early years are characterized by **rapid and dramatic development**.
- With the experiences children have from **birth to five years** affecting longer term outcomes including ability to learn, form relationships, and interact positively with external environments.



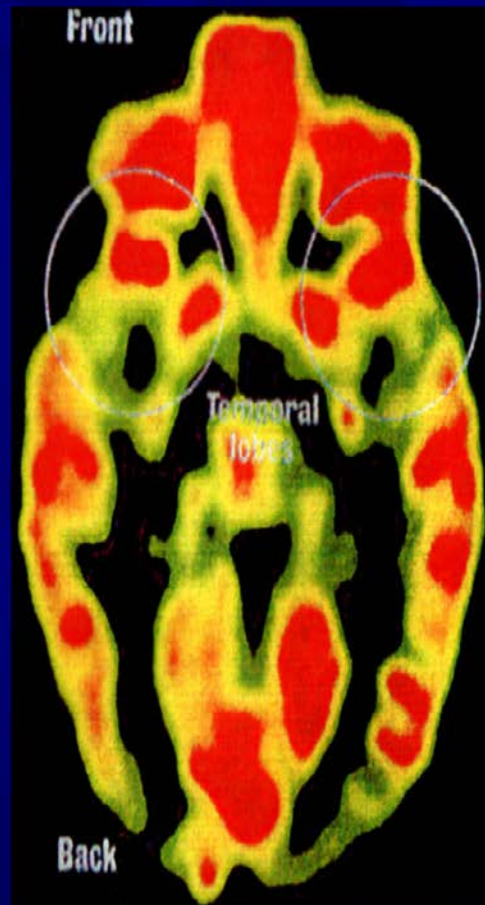
The Effect of “Toxic Stress”

- The detrimental impact of a negative environment on a child’s development is well documented in the literature.
- If children do not experience attachment with their families and are not shown care and attention, it can have severe consequences.

- A lack of attachment with a nurturing caretaker **during infancy** can impact children's ability to form meaningful relationships into the future.
- Further, a lack of stimulation during the early years **can damage and diminish the neuronal pathways** available for learning and cause development delay across a number of domains.

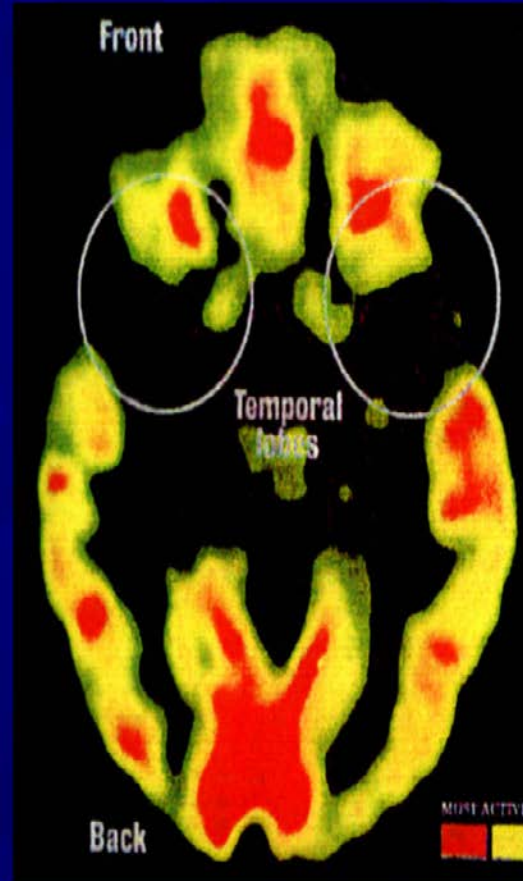
- Early intervention activities can address the **uneven childhood development** that can occur as a result of a range of factors, including socio-economic status, level of disadvantage, locations.
- Early intervention activities can also address the cycles of entrenched disadvantage within families **to drive better outcomes** for children and their families.

Normal Brain Development



Source: *Newsweek* Special Edition, 1997

At-Risk Brain Development



Source: *Newsweek* Special Edition, 1997
PROF. MTZK

V. Types of children included in ECI services

Types of children included in ECI services

Children with:

- Developmental delays in any area of development, such as physical development, thinking, language, hearing, seeing and social and emotional development
- Disabilities of all types
- Malnutrition

Types of children included in ECI services(Contd.)

- Fragile birth status, such as low birth weight, prematurity
- Chronic illnesses or diseases, such as leprosy, HIV and malaria
- Atypical behaviours, such as autism spectrum and hyperactivity
- High-risk family situations, such as severe poverty, internal displacement, community and domestic violence, neglect, parental depression, single or adolescent mothers, homelessness, etc.

VI. Role of Physiotherapist in ECI

Role of Physiotherapist in ECI

ECI services usually include the disciplines of

- 1) **Health** and nutrition
- 2) Child and social protection
- 3) Inclusive nurseries, preschool and special education

Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Teams

- **Interdisciplinary teams** collaborate closely but members may separately assess and/or serve the child and family
- **Transdisciplinary teams** assess children together with parents, and they jointly support one early intervention specialist or therapist who serves the child and family

Physiotherapist is an important team member!

- All ECI personnel are trained in
 - child protection
 - education
 - health and nutrition
 - other specialized fields

- Pre- and in-service training is provided to prepare several categories of specialists.
 - early intervention specialists
 - speech/language therapists
 - occupational therapists
 - **physiotherapists**

- In addition, training includes **other professionals**, who add ECI services to their existing professional development.
 - psychologists
 - social workers
 - physicians
 - nurses
 - midwives
 - others

Community-based

- ECI services are made available **at community levels**.
- They are **formally and effectively linked** with all other relevant health, nutrition, education, protection and social services that are available in the community.
- They seek to secure **strong community support** and often have community committees that support them.

Community-based(Contd.)

- ECI services are conducted **within the communities** of the child and the natural environment of the home in order **to maximise child development** through the provision of consistent nurturing care and activities, and social involvement.
- When preferred by the family, visits are conducted with parents and caregivers in community centres for child care and development and in preschools.

Review

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References

- National Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Intervention, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar(2017-2021)
- Introduction to Early Childhood Intervention(U Thein Oak Sein, Dr. Emily Vargas Baron, Dr. Roe Nwe Wai)

Questions



THANK YOU