

# Ready Already

### SYSTEM SUBOPTIMALITY

The child's ecosystem often doesn't feel ready for early childhood. It feels inadequate to be able to handle it on its own; and feels precariously dependent on institutional support. Those who belong to lower socioeconomic sections, live with a sense of resignation at not getting fair access to opportunities that the privileged have. Inadequacy, unfairness and resignation are what the child is born into – not a healthy foundation to build a life on.

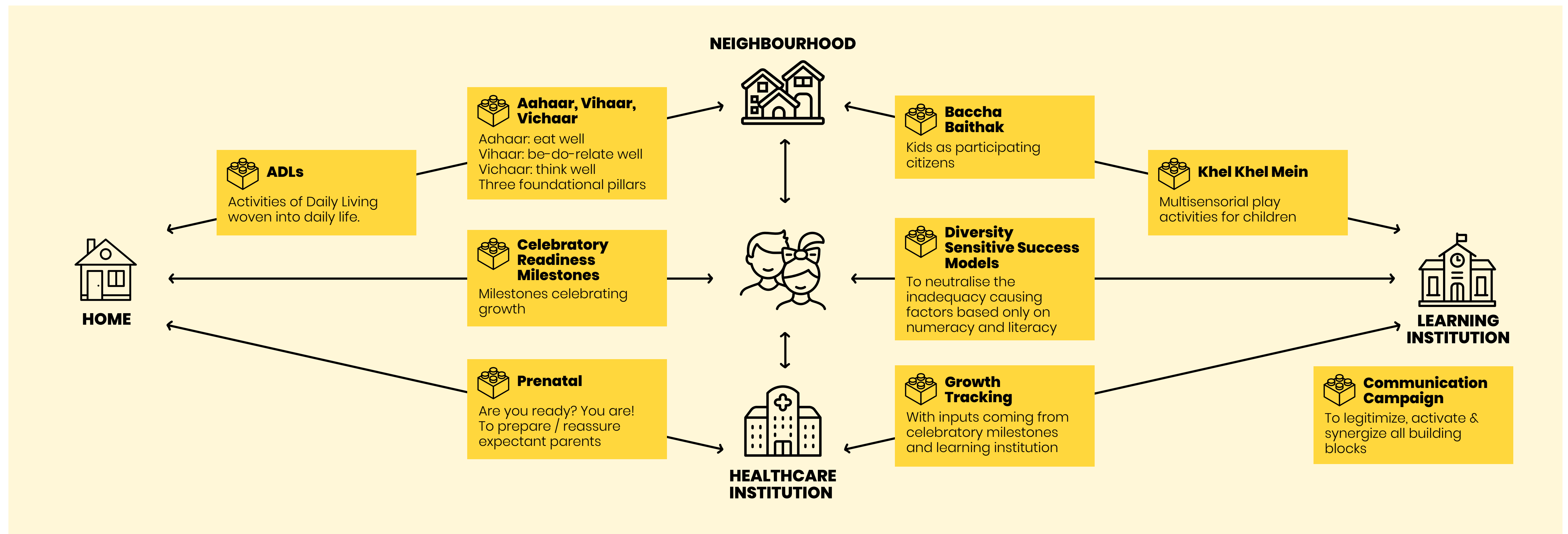
### MENTAL MODEL SHIFT

**FROM** Parents and family aren't enough to give the child a vibrant childhood

**TO** Most children are born childhood-ready; most families are childhood-ready; most just don't know it yet.

**CONCEPT:** Ready Already – Readiness is extremely subjective. This concept adds intuitive objectivity to it.

This set of building blocks helps the child's ecosystem (including the parents) not just get a sense of where they stand on the readiness scale, it also reassures them that they are already ready. It helps the system prioritise all that is essential for the child, and discover that the essentials are already available in their environment; and in abundance.



## CURRENT STATE

There is a general stress in the system due to a harsh readiness scale that's based only on numeracy & literacy

## DESIRED STATE

Diversity Sensitive Success Models: a holistic readiness scale that recognizes all facets of child's development

# Play Is Primal

## SYSTEM SUBOPTIMALITY

We seem to be in a hurry to turn children into students. Forcing a formal structure too early is interrupting nature's processes that are designed to give the little one a holistic life foundation. Disproportionate focus on 'education' too early is robbing kids of rich multisensorial play based engagement with the world around. Faced with a pressure to prepare their child for school, parents consider play frivolous; an 'extra'curricular activity.

## MENTAL MODEL SHIFT

**FROM** Play and learning are mutually exclusive

**TO** Play and learning are inextricably linked. Play is primal. Play is how children naturally learn and grow.

**CONCEPT:** Play is Primal – play isn't just games or sports, it's the idiom children naturally use to be, do and relate with the world and their own selves. This concept is rooted in the insight that play is the child's instinctive way to grow. Through play, the child develops her early foundation for living, learning and livelihood. Children don't play to learn; learning happens when they are at play. This set of building blocks will not just ensure that the child's instinct to 'play and grow' isn't suppressed by the carers, it will also help them with easy possibilities of introducing play in the child's life, in interesting and novel ways. When play happens, children don't just take away learning, every child brings in her/his own unique funds of inputs; this enriches everyone, including the carers.

## SOCIAL STAGES OF PLAY

**UNOCCUPIED PLAY** The random movements that infants make with no clear purpose is the beginning of play.

**SOLITARY PLAY** When children start to play on their own. Children do not seem to notice other children sitting or playing nearby during this type of play.

**ONLOOKER PLAY** When children watch others play. The child who is looking may ask questions but there is no effort to join the play.

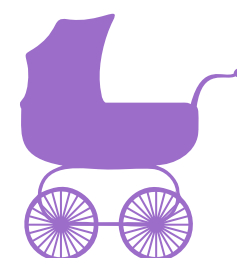
**PARALLEL PLAY** When children begin to play side-by-side with other children without any interaction. They are paying attention to each other.

**ASSOCIATIVE PLAY** When children start asking questions of each other. They have similar goals but no set rules.

**SOCIAL PLAY** When children begin to share ideas and toys, and follow established rules and guidelines.

### SENSORIMOTOR STAGE

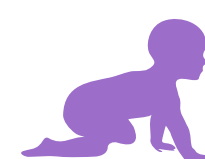
The child begins to interact with the environment



0-2

### PREOPERATIONAL STAGE

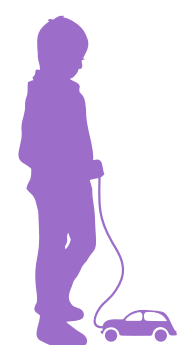
The child begins to represent the world symbolically.



2-6 OR 7

### CONCRETE OPERATIONAL STAGE

The child learns rules such as conversation



7-11 OR 12

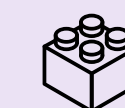
### FORMAL OPERATIONAL STAGE

The adolescent can transcend the concrete situation and think about the future.



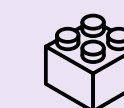
12-ADULTHOOD

WE PLAY



### Time and participants for group play

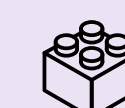
A building block that helps the carers and children conceive and plan group play activities with diverse participants from their community



### Spaces and equipment for group play

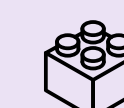
A building block that helps the carers and children develop and ingeniously use spaces and (often repurposed) everyday objects for group play

I PLAY



### Time and facilitators of individual play

A building block that helps the carers and children conceive, and create play activities that the child can engage in on her own



### Spaces and equipment for individual play

A building block that helps the carers and children find and ingeniously use spaces and (often repurposed) everyday objects for individual play

PLAY TIME

PLAY SPACE

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has enshrined the right to engage in play that is appropriate to the age of the child in Article 31**

Children need to develop a variety of skill sets to optimize their development and manage toxic stress. Research demonstrates that developmentally appropriate play with parents and peers is a singular opportunity to promote the social-emotional, cognitive, language, and self-regulation skills that build executive function and a prosocial brain. Furthermore, play supports the formation of the safe, stable, and nurturing relationships with all carers that children need to thrive. Play is not frivolous: it enhances brain structure and function and promotes executive function (i.e. the process of learning, rather than the content), which allow us to pursue goals and ignore distractions. Play is fundamentally important for learning 21st century skills, such as problem solving, collaboration, and creativity, which require the executive functioning skills that are critical for adult success.

**The Power of Play: A Pediatric Role in Enhancing Development in Young Children – THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS | CLINICAL REPORT | SEPTEMBER 01 2018.** Play is to the 21st century what work was to industrialization. It demonstrates a way of knowing, doing, and creating value - In its 2012 exhibit "The Century of the Child: 1900-2000," the Museum of Modern Art. Play and exploration trigger the secretion of BDNF - brain-derived neurotrophic factor, a substance essential for the growth of brain cells

## CURRENT STATE

Carers force children to study instead of play. Children grow up feeling guilty about following their instincts.

## DESIRED STATE

Play is seen as not just natural and healthy but essential for children.

# Living Moments are Learning Moments

## SYSTEM SUBOPTIMALITY

Majority of parents feel there is a lack of good learning opportunities for their children. This sense of scarcity comes from the way the system defines learning – FLN. While literacy and numeracy are important, they definitely aren't the only competencies the child needs to become self-reliant and world-ready.

## MENTAL MODEL SHIFT

**FROM** Learning moments are scarce; learning spaces are scarce; time is scarce. Children need to be forced to focus learning.  
**TO** Learning moments are abundant. In early childhood, the pace of growth and learning is the highest. Every living moment is a learning moment.

**CONCEPT:** Living Moments are Learning Moments – The best teacher of life is not a teacher, but life itself. The next best would be life simulation, not a classroom. A child who actively participates in her own 'activities of daily living' becomes self-reliant early and begins taking charge of her living and learning. These children are much more ready for school as compared to those who don't. This set of building blocks will ensure that the child's journey from the womb to being world-ready takes place in the first 3000 days of her life – a solid foundation. Every living moment is a learning moment – especially those where the child is actively involved and is not just being handed down secondhand learnings.

## ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING (ADLS)

are essential and routine tasks that most young, healthy individuals can perform without assistance. The inability to accomplish essential activities of daily living may lead to unsafe conditions and poor quality of life. Activities that support independent living – ambulating, communicating, continence & toileting, dressing & personal hygiene, procuring and eating food and time & money management.



## DEFINE THE MINIMUM BASIC INPUT & OUTPUT

Define minimum basic input – Aahaar-Vihaar-Vichaar and minimum basic outcome – ADL based minimum basic competencies that every child will be enabled to achieve in the first 3000 days – three 1000 day blocks; defined in easy nomenclature (e.g seekh)

## POLICY: FIRST 3000 DAYS AS A CHILD'S RIGHT

Declare minimum basic Aahaar-Vihaar-Vichaar as every child's right, and the society's responsibility

## RHYTHM BOX

A building block that introduces rhythms to the growing child – natural and cultural

## CAMPAIGN

A building block that helps local governments localize the '3000-Day' mission and declaration

## CULTURE BOX संस्कृति पिढारा

A building block that encourages the parents and community to introduce the native language and culture

## LIVING+LEARNING MOMENTS

A building block that helps parents appreciate the learning in the living moments; and create more such moments

## CURRENT STATE

Isolate the child from all activities of daily living so that s/he can focus on learning – FLN. Child isn't adequately self-reliant and world-ready when it's time for the child to step out of home.

## DESIRED STATE

Recognise ADL - Activities of Daily living as a series of invaluable and meaningful learning moments. ADLs are the new wholesome metric of world-readiness; ADLs of course include FLN.

# The Uniquely Unique Child

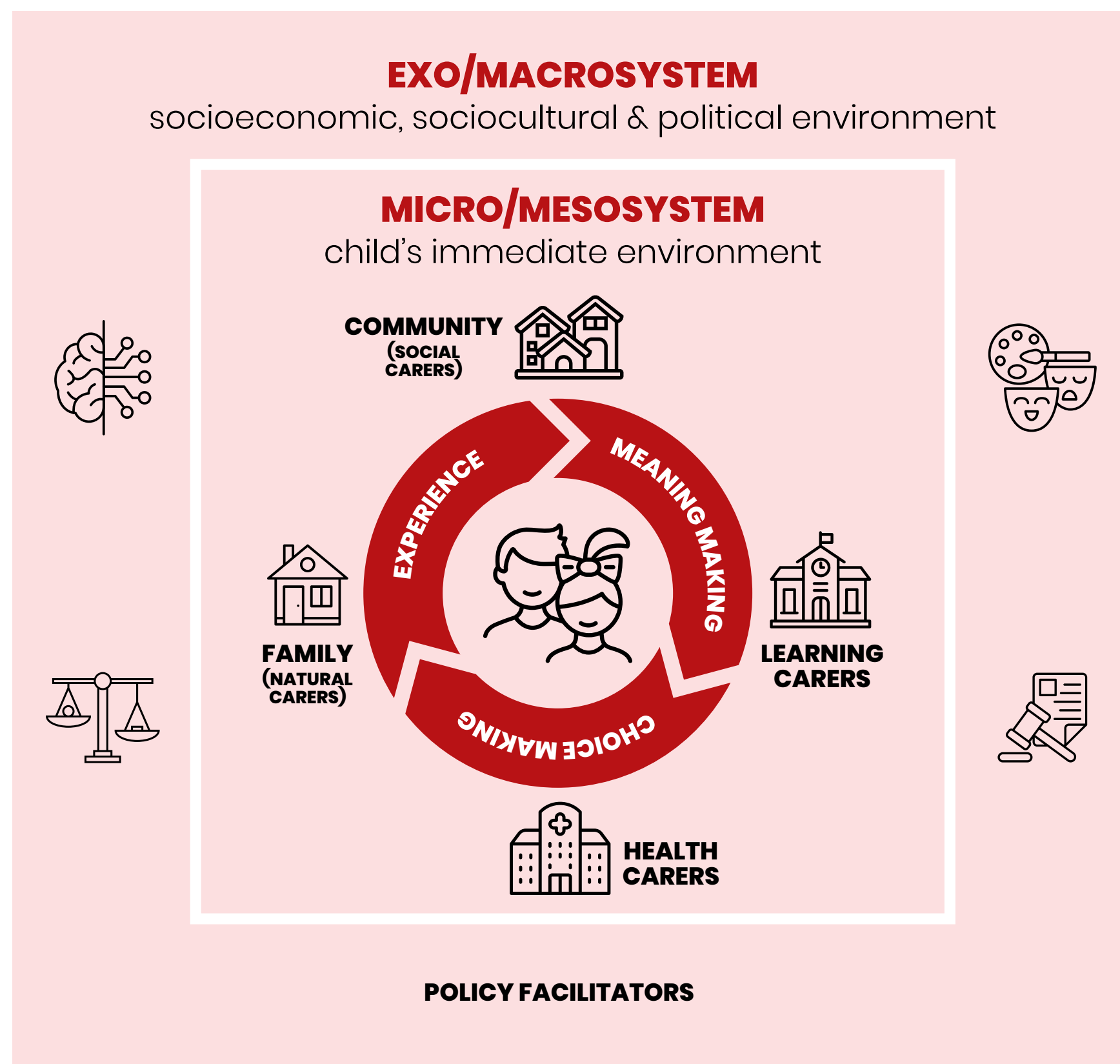
## SYSTEM SUBOPTIMALITY

The current early childhood system treats all children as if they were products being manufactured on an assembly line. The assumption is all (or at least the majority) are the same, and will (even should) have similar journeys that can be predicted and controlled if they deviate from the predestined trajectory – predictable, compliant adults-in-progress.

## MENTAL MODEL SHIFT

**FROM** Fragmented learning; more like adding capability ingredients into the (empty vessel) child's mind  
**TO** Integrated learning. Seamless co-held by all carers – natural, social, health & learning

**CONCEPT:** The Uniquely Unique Child – Every child, and her journey are unique. So unique that comparisons are utterly wrong, and forcing a direction, limiting, even crippling. This set of building blocks respects the uniqueness of each child and her context – her family and her community. It helps all the childhood carers – family (natural carers), health ASHA (health carers), pre-school/anganwadi (learning carers) and community (social facilitators) to play their respective roles in a manner that each child gets the childhood s/he deserves – seamlessly integrated and not fragmented, and uniquely unique, just the way s/he is. This set rides on the building blocks that already exist.



**MINDSET**

For this approach to succeed it is critical to shift narratives. The thinking of all five facilitators currently rooted in an interventionist mindset that is disabling for the child

**INTEGRATED ANCHORSHIP**

A building block that ensures that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. That all anchors/facilitators know their roles and the roles seamlessly combine together in a synergistic way

**METRICS**

This building block will make the management of the concept measurable. It will ensure that the essential is prioritised over the desirable. That there are objective indicators and checks and balances in place that are jointly held by all the anchors

**ACTIVE LEARNING LOOPS**

This building block ensures ensures that the child's learning takes place primarily through active learning loops – Experience > Meaning Making > Choice Making. Which aren't broken as it happens in fragmented systems.

**EXECUTION EVOLUTION**

This building block ensures the purpose is never diluted during deployment. Thanks to action and feedback working in conjunction, the concept constantly evolves and is a learning system in itself.

**GROWING UP TO BE A CARER**

This building block helps the child to progressively become a carer for younger children. The child doesn't remain just a value consumer, but learns to become a value generator – a foundational capability

## CURRENT STATE

Fragmented learning system – the whole is lesser than the sum of parts.

## DESIRED STATE

Integrated learning system – all carers operate in sync. Common system that helps each child live his/her own unique learning journey

# Early Childhood Care Platform

### SYSTEM SUBOPTIMALITY

The current early childhood system ensures that the child and her family get all that the system believes is critical for them – health (through ASHA) – vaccines, vitamin supplements, medicines etc.; learning and formal engagement with fellow children – anganwadis, preschools etc. In spite of all this, one thing that the child remains deficient of is ‘care’, true care. Care in all its expressions – informal and formal.

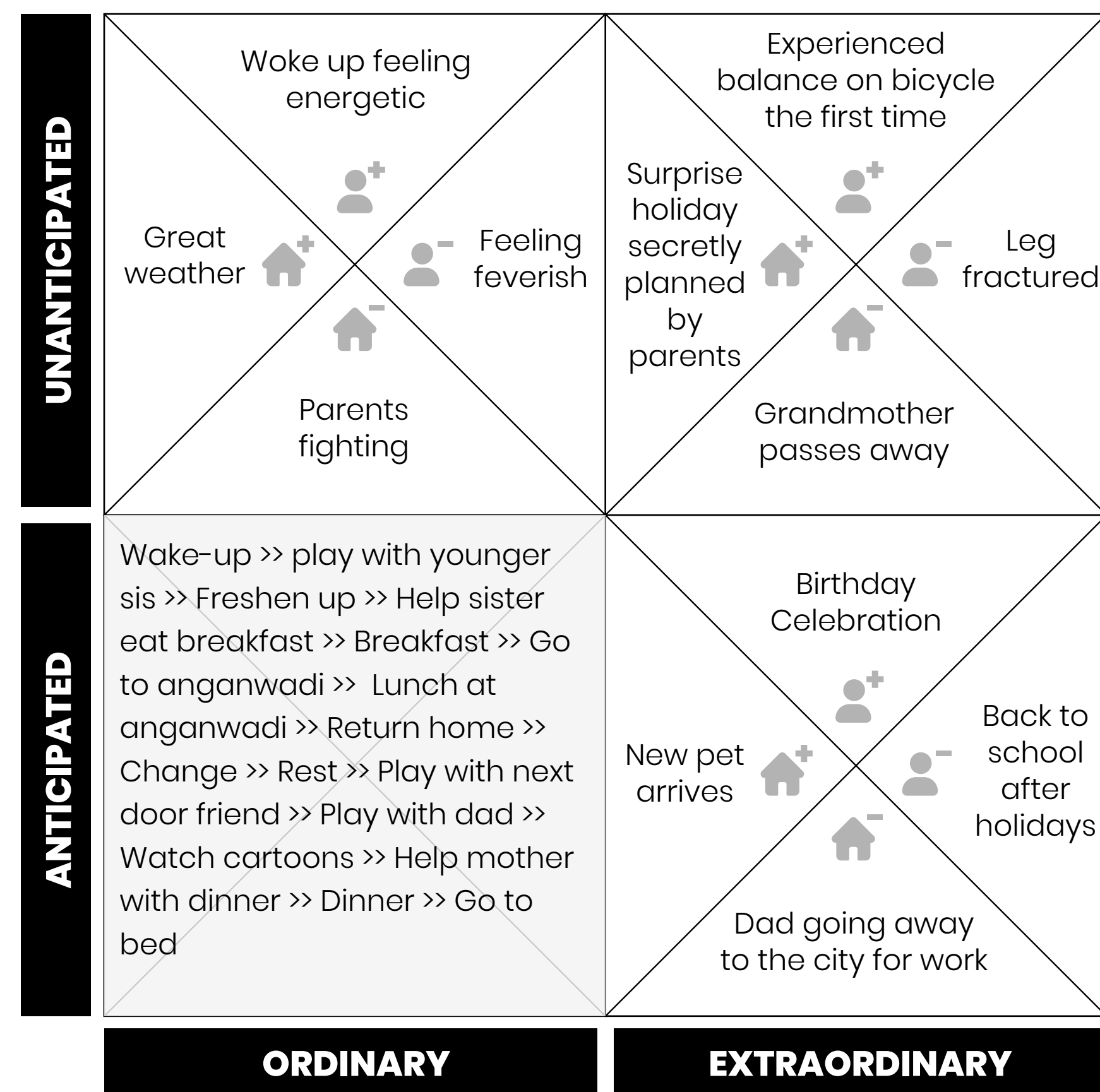
### MENTAL MODEL SHIFT

**FROM** Early childhood ‘care’ delivered through SOPs

**TO** Early childhood care is abundant and all pervasive, it just needs a platform to get delivered in all kinds of contexts and in all its myriad forms

**CONCEPT:** Early Childhood Care Platform – A platform that provides child carers an intuitive interface to every thing that is essential for the child, in any conceivable life-situation. The assumption is that all that is essential already exists in the child’s world; and in abundance. It has an intuitive choice architecture that helps the carers come up with the most appropriate care behavior, activity, process in that life situation.

### LIFE SITUATIONS



### Choice Architecture layer (software + liveware)

Designed to use the stack to come up with the most appropriate ‘care’ choices for the child

### Life Situations layer

Ordinary, extraordinary, anticipated, unanticipated situations that the child experiences

### Cultural layer

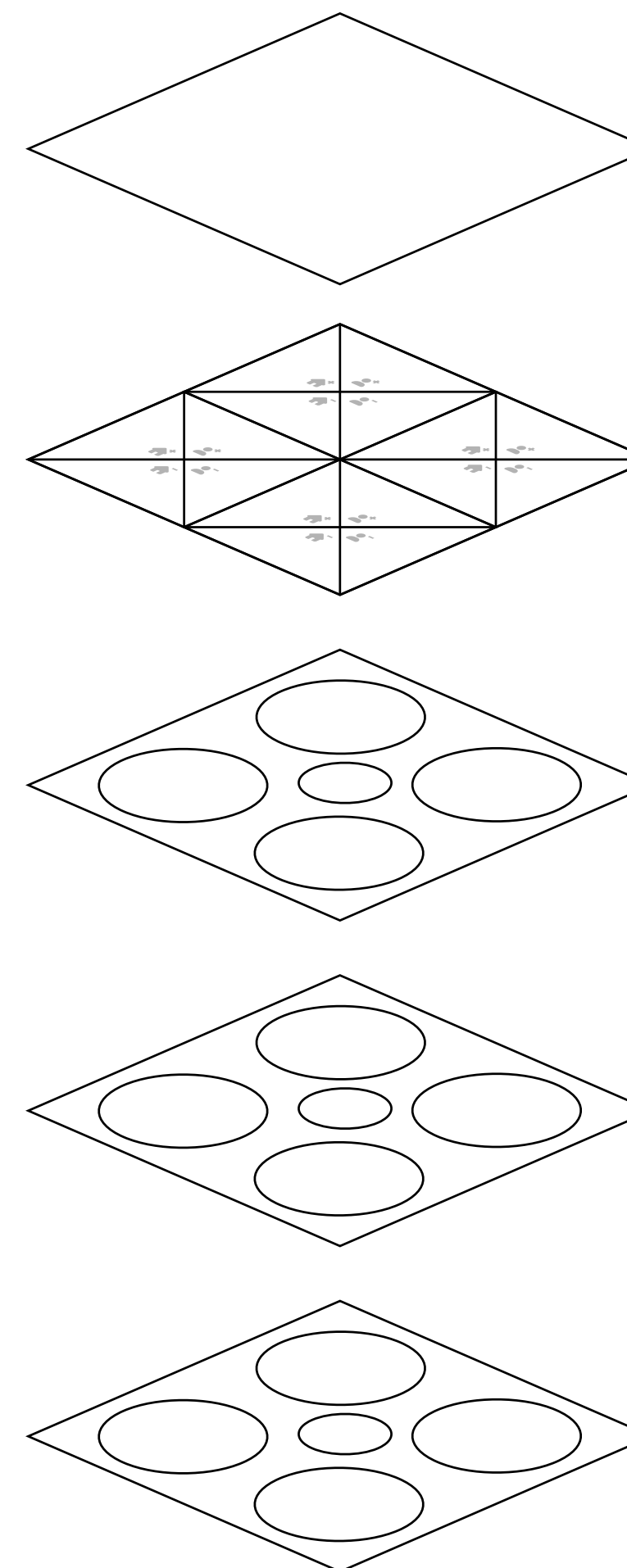
Language, domestic & community rituals, faith, folklore, literature, myths, legends, belief systems

### Physical infrastructure layer

Home, pre-school, play ground, clinic, community center

### Geographical context

Nature, climate, mountains/plains/river, flora, fauna



### INTERFACE

This building block helps the carers and children to come up with the most appropriate care behavior using the stack. This uses a database of life situations and a choice facilitation engine that has a very intuitive simple interface – real world + digital



### LIFE SITUATIONS DATABASE

A life-situations wiki that is constantly evolving.



### CULTURAL PRACTICES

A cultural practices wiki that is constantly evolving. Hyperlocalised; also, ensures dying practices are chronicled. This building block provides an opportunity to introduce new child friendly cultural practices



### PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Constantly updated mapping. This building block will ensure parents are aware of all the facilities. And can demand these from their political representatives



### GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Constantly updated mapping. This building block will ensure parents are aware of how engaging with nature is an essential part of early childhood. This will lead to environment sensitivity too.

## CURRENT STATE

Isolate the child from all activities of daily living so that s/he can focus on learning – FLN. Child isn’t adequately self-reliant and world-ready when it’s time for the child to step out of home.

## DESIRED STATE

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