

# Nepal 2024-25



## Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Multiple Indicator  
Cluster Surveys

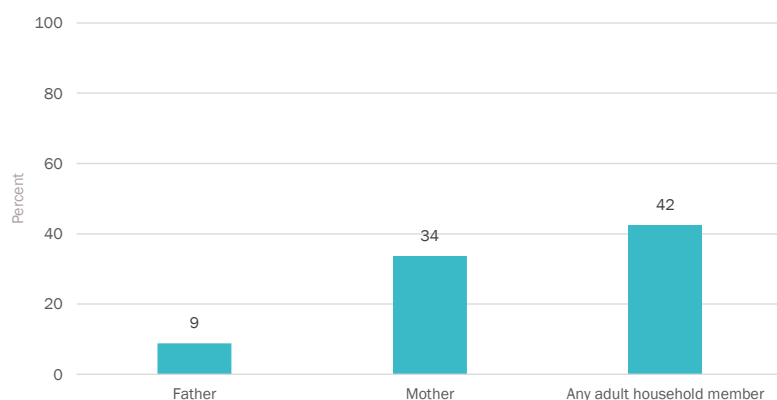
### Early Stimulation and Early Childhood Education



Government of Nepal  
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers  
National Statistics Office



#### Early Stimulation & Responsive Care

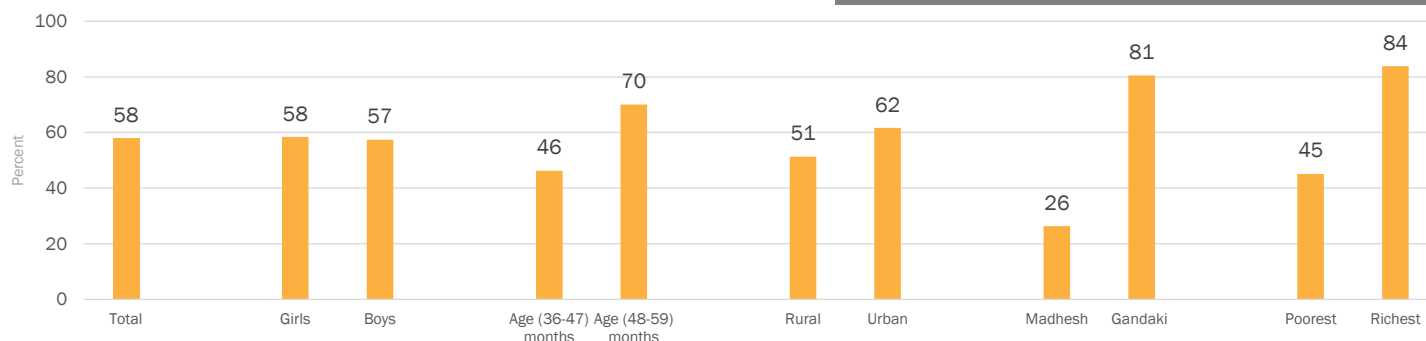


Percentage of children age 2-4 years with whom the father, mother, or adult household members engaged in activities that provide early stimulation and responsive care during the last three days

Note: Activities include reading books to or looking at picture books with the child; telling stories to the child; singing songs to or with the child; taking the child outside the home; playing with the child; and naming, counting or drawing things for or with the child.

#### Attendance to Early Childhood Education Programmes

Percentage of children age 3-4 years attending an early childhood education programme, by background characteristics



Early childhood, which spans the period up to 8 years of age, is critical for cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. During these years, a child's newly developing brain is highly plastic and responsive to change.

Optimal early childhood development requires a stimulating and nurturing environment, access to books and learning materials, interactions with responsive and attentive caregivers, adequate nutrients, access to good quality early childhood education, and safety and protection. All these aspects of the environment contribute to developmental outcomes for children.

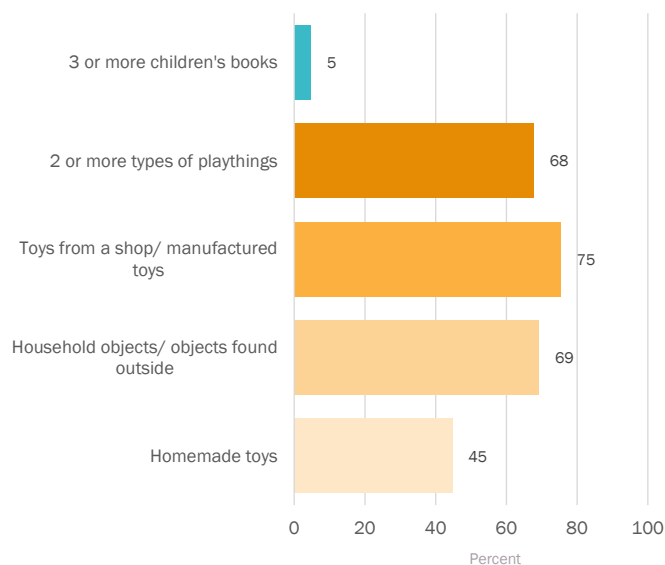
A broad range of factors can prevent children from reaching their full developmental potential. These risks are often interrelated and include poverty, poor health, exposure to violence and high stress levels, inadequate care, and limited learning opportunities. Timely and effective interventions can prevent these risks and address the barriers disproportionately affecting children living in the most vulnerable contexts. Investments during the early years are one of the most cost-effective ways countries can reduce inequalities among children and promote the best start in life for all.

### Key Messages

- Forty-two percentage (42%) of children aged 2-4 years had an adult member of their families who engaged with them in activities that promoted learning and school readiness during the three days prior to the survey. Mothers were more likely to engage in early stimulation and responsive care activities with their children aged 2-4 (34% of mothers in comparison to only 9% of fathers).
- Children are more likely to attend an ECE program at the age of 48-59 months (70%) than at the age of 36-47 months (46%). Moreover, children from urban areas (62%) and the richest households (84%) are more likely to attend an ECE programme than children from rural areas (51%) and from the poorest households (45%).
- There are disparities between provinces in terms of children's attendance in ECE programmes - 81% of children aged 36 to 59 months in Gandaki province attend an ECE programme in comparison to only 26% of children in Madhesh.
- Access to play materials and children's books are critical for early stimulation and learning. While many children (< 5 years) in Nepal have access to two or more types of playthings (68%) and 75% of children play with manufactured toys, only 5% of children had three or more children's books to read at home.
- In many important ways, children aged 2-4 years in Nepal are ready to learn. Sixty-three percent (63%) of children at the ages of 2-4 are developmentally on track according to the Early Childhood Development Index.
- Children aged 2-4 from the richest households (83%), whose mothers/caretakers have secondary or higher educational attainment (83%) are more likely to be developmentally on track in comparison to children from the poorest households (50%), whose mothers/caretakers have no education (46%).
- Nearly one in five Nepali children (18.6%) lack adequate supervision, with rates four times higher in Sudurpashchim (32.7%) and Karnali (30.2%) compared to Gandaki (7.9%), revealing critical regional disparities

## Access to Books and Playthings, and Child Supervision

### Toys and children's books



Percentage of children under age five according to the number of children's books available in their homes, and their access to different types of playthings and toys.

### Inadequate supervision of children

Province	Inadequate supervision
Nepal	18.6
Koshi	22.8
Madhesh	15.5
Bagmati	16.0
Gandaki	7.9
Lumbini	12.8
Karnali	30.2
Sudurpashchim	32.7

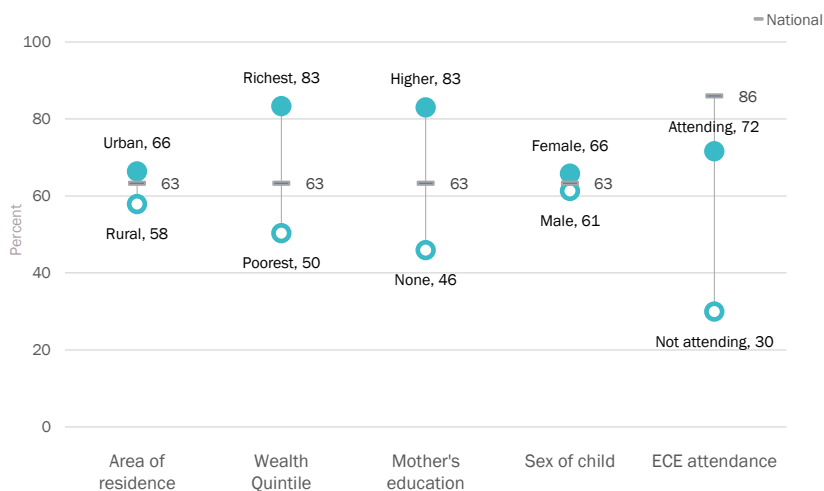
Percentage of children under age five left alone or under the supervision of another child younger than 10 years of age for more than one hour at least once in the last week, by province

## Early Childhood Development Index 2030 (ECDI2030)

The ECDI2030 captures the achievement of key developmental milestones by children between the ages of 24 and 59 months.

The measure includes 20 questions about the way children behave in certain everyday situations, and the skills and knowledge they have acquired, reflecting the increasing difficulty of the skills children acquire as they grow. The 20 items are organised according to the three general domains of health, learning and psychosocial well-being. A child is considered to be developmentally on track if they have achieved the minimum number of milestones expected for their age group.

The data generated by the ECDI2030 can be used for monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 4.2.1, and to inform government efforts to improve developmental outcomes among young children.



Percentage of children aged 2-4 years who are developmentally on track in health, learning, and psychosocial well-being, by background characteristics

ECE: Early childhood education. Children age 2 are excluded, as early childhood education attendance is only collected for age 3-4 years.

The Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out in 2024-25 by the National Statistics Office as part of the global MICS programme. Technical support was provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF and Government of Nepal provided financial support.

The objective of this snapshot is to disseminate selected findings from the Nepal MICS 2024-25 related to Early Childhood Development (ECD). Data from this snapshot can be found in tables TC.9.1, LN.1.1, TC.9.2.2 TC.9.3 and TC.10.1 in the Survey Findings Report.

Further statistical snapshots and the Survey Findings Report for this and other surveys are available on [mics.unicef.org/surveys](https://mics.unicef.org/surveys).