

Introduction

Children represent an important highly vulnerable group of the population. In Egypt the children from birth up to five years constitute 14.15% of total population. The first two years of the child life is critical period of human life, during this time the child continuously growing up quickly. All major body systems undergo progressive maturation , (*Ahmed, 1998 and Arab council for children and development , 2001*).

The infancy period defined by *Campbell et al., (1995) and Allender and Spradly , (2001)* as the period start from birth to 1 year, the infancy period is one of rapid motor, cognitive and social development. Through mutuality with the care- giver (Parent / guardian), the infant establishes a basic trust in the world and establishes the foundation for future interpersonal relation ships.

Infancy is characterized by the need to establish harmony between the self and the world. To achieve this harmony, mother should satisfy her infant's needs such as food, warmth, comfort, environmental stimulation and opportunities for self exploration and expression and nurturing relationship so that the infant experiences a sense of trust in the world and in himself , (*Weiler and Colvert, 1997*).

Children between the ages of 1 and 3 years are referred to as toddlers. The second year of child life characterized by intense activity and discovery. It is the time of marked physical and personality development. Children at this age acquire language begin self-control, develop increasing awareness of dependence and

independence and begin to develop a self-concept , (*Campbell, et al., 1995 and Pilletri, 2003*).

Health promotion defined by *Black and Jacobs , (1993)* as the acquisition of mental, physical, and spiritual assets to protect and buffer us from disease as well as move us along the continuum toward high-level wellness *Whetsell et al., (2000)* added that pediatric health promotion is based on the belief that if children learn the value of wellness early, it will become their way of life.

It was mentioned by *Schulte et al., (1997)* that the home greatly influences the infant's physical and emotional growth and development. Children need to have clean and supportive environments at home that nurture their development and protect them from harm.

The mother has the major influence on the child's life, in fact one of the best ways of producing sustainable improvements in child health is by directing projects toward improvement in the mother's well-being. A healthy, well educated mother is the first line of defense between her child and adverse factors in the physical and social environment , (*Seear, 2000*).

It was reported by *Allender , (1998)* that all children, where ever they born, need adequate proper care, which includes love, nutrition, cleanliness, stimulation, sleep, health care , immunization, safe living environment and knowledgeable care givers.

The role of the community health nurse offers the opportunity to teach health promotion, prevention and health maintenance to children and caregivers , (*Stanhope and Lancaster, 1996*).

Magnitude of The Problem

Child health is one of the major concerns of public health throughout the world. In Egypt developing an awareness of child care is one of the most cherished goals. Caring for today's children is a guarantee of the nation's future. Children are true wealth of our country , (*Unicef, 1989 and Soltani et al., 1999*).

Children within the first two years of life represent an important and highly vulnerable group of the society. They face special risks (e.g., susceptibility to communicable disease, developmental and survival challenges, etc.), which adversely affect their health and endanger their lives. Many of this childhood illnesses susceptibility and challenges can be prevented by early intervention and strengthens the mothers role toward their children care. So they are in need of special attention , (*Mansour, 2001*).
